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November 24, 1941

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Crisis in Labor

The Issues Involved . . . . . *Editorial*

For a National Policy . . . . . *Alan Walker*

The union movement has grown up, and if it is to conduct itself like a responsible adult it must be controlled by the same social discipline governing the rest of the community

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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Labor's Crisis

THE ISSUE in the controversy between John L. Lewis and the United States is not the union shop, any more than the issue in the case of the Railroad Brotherhoods is the question how large a wage increase they are to get. The specific claims and grievances in a dozen other strikes or threatened strikes are not the issue, as far as the American people and their government are concerned. The issue is that all these groups, mighty and less powerful alike, are willing to throttle the production which is necessary if Nazism is not to trample on the democratic forces of the world, in order to gain concessions which mediators have not been willing to grant. They are ready to exchange their birthright for a mess of pottage.

There are many who see the threatened civil conflict as a collision between the labor movement and an aroused public opinion, and welcome it as such. These champions of the upperdog have long fought the very existence of unions; they have been anti-labor in nearly every issue which has arisen. Now at last, they believe, organized labor has so exposed its flanks by a rash offensive that they can deal it a decisive blow.

Those responsible for this editorial are not of that persuasion. They are lifelong defenders of the unions; those who are eligible are, without exception, union members. They express, not the opinion of some employer or advertiser, but their own. This opinion, they believe, is shared by millions of union members; perhaps by a majority. The difference between them and Mr. Lewis is that they make no distinction, in this crisis, between their loyalty to their union and their loyalty to their country; they know that the union cannot be advanced at peril to the nation.

It would be a different matter if the miners, the railroad men and all the others were oppressed and without secure rights. But the opposite is true. The right to organize and carry on collective bargaining is now recognized by law and is enforced by government. Employees cannot be discharged for union activity. Impartial boards of mediation have been set up to adjust all claims. The workers have obtained great advancement in recent years and more is in prospect for them. We are aware that employers often fail to grant justified demands, and that pressure must be brought on them to do so. We know that when production is interrupted by a strike, the employer must assume his full share of the responsibility. But we also firmly believe that in the present emergency, after all the resources of collective bargaining and mediation have been exhausted in any dispute, we must in our own interest refrain from exercising the right to strike. In spite of present denial of any advances to which we may believe we are entitled, we must close ranks to avert the infinitely greater danger. The leaders who incite us to do otherwise are incurring a fearful responsibility, the tragic consequences of which are certain to recoil, not only on their heads but on ours.

If the miners, the railway men or others unanimously resort to strikes, there is no force in a democracy which can stop them. Neither laws nor policemen can do it; the army can take over the offices of the mines and railways, but it cannot dig coal or run

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trains. No doubt the union officials concerned rely on this fact to induce the government to grant demands which they could not gain by argument. If they succeed, they will convict themselves in the eyes of all other American citizens of having exploited the national peril for their own advantage. Labor will not soon live down such a judgment; the memory will breed a bitterness too dangerous to be courted in a world prone to the totalitarian solution of industrial difficulties. But the government may not always succumb to the pressure. Public opinion, as expressed in Congress and elsewhere, is flowing strongly the other way. There is no doubt about this; the leaders of labor can breast the tide only at their peril. What if they persist in carrying out their threats?

If a serious general strike in a basic defense industry actually occurs, there can be only two possible outcomes. One is that it may be broken by defection of large numbers of strikers themselves, whose hearts will not be in a struggle allying them with Hitler. This would lead to damage to the unions concerned which might be irreparable and in any case would take long to repair. The other possible outcome is victory or compromise after a bitter struggle, the major result of which will be that during its course the tanks, planes and guns, for lack of which the defenders of freedom are dying, and for lack of which at the right time we would face disaster, cannot be produced or transported.

What of the union shop, for which Mr. Lewis threatens to imperil his country? As an enemy not only of the President but of the defense program, he has shrewdly chosen his issue, for the union shop is enjoyed by many labor organizations and is widely regarded as a bulwark of organized labor's power. On this issue he has already enlisted the support of other leaders who do not share his vanity or his personal feuds, and he may be able to stampede a large part of the labor movement into his ranks, regardless of the larger dangers involved.

The union shop is not, contrary to popular understanding, identical with the closed shop. In the latter only union members may be hired; in it any man who wishes a job must first join the union. If he is excluded for any reason or cannot afford the price, he is automatically denied employment. This gives the union organization monopolistic power over the labor supply, which is sometimes used to restrict production or to extort bribes. In the union shop, on the contrary, the employer may hire non-members of the union. Usually he may do so only if no competent union member is available, but in any case entrance to the industry is not restricted if jobs are open. The only requirement is that, once the employee is hired, he must join the union. In many union shops, employees who are non-members when the agreement is signed are not required to join.

The first argument for the union shop is that it prevents the employer from imperiling the existence of the union or undermining its power by building up a large body of non-union employees. Discrimination against union members in hiring is almost as dangerous to labor organization as is discharge of members for union activity—and that is contrary to the National Labor Relations Act.

Since, under collective bargaining, wages and working conditions are controlled for all by the collective agreements, it is not necessary for any given individual to pay union dues in order to enjoy union conditions if the union shop does not prevail. This gives rise to the second good argument. Why should the non-members enjoy benefits for which they do not pay or assume responsibility in enforcement? Union membership is an obligation of industrial citizenship, and every citizen has a duty to pay his taxes, whether he wants to or not.

This argument is reinforced in the case of progressive unions which have assumed obligations to the industry to enforce discipline and prevent stoppages or other interferences with production contrary to the agreement. The union can exercise this responsibility only if it is strong and has a membership co-extensive with its duties. It is therefore necessary for the employer not to employ those who insist on continuing to be non-members.

The arguments against the union shop center about the desirability of preserving the liberty of the individual worker to join or not to join, as he pleases. We can see no good reason for maintaining this liberty, in the case of an honest and democratic union which already contains a majority of the employees. Americans do not have the liberty not to be citizens of the nation, and thus to enjoy the benefits of our system without assuming its obligations.

But, it will be instantly replied, not all unions are honest or democratic. When union members cannot vote grafting officials out of office or even have enough knowledge of the union's affairs to be certain of honest management, how can they protest except by resigning? Both the closed and the union shop discourage such protests by making resignation from the union equivalent to resignation from the job.

This objection does not rest on unwarranted assumptions. Some closed-shop unions, like the carpenters or the hod-carriers, have not had elections for years. Graft and tyranny, racketeering, extortion of money from employers or collusion with them are known to exist in sections of the movement—and especially in the older unions of the AFL. The labor movement as a whole has been either unable or unwilling to purge itself or offer any guarantees of democracy in its constituent unions. George Browne, recently convicted of extortion under a federal indictment, was even able to remain on the Executive Council of the AFL until a few weeks before his conviction. John L. Lewis him-

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self, though not accused of financial dishonesty, has in the past exercised a brutal tyranny over sections of his membership by use of closed-shop or union-shop agreements. We scarcely blame employers or mediators for reluctance to grant this power over hundreds of thousands of men to such a vain, irresponsible and contentious man as he has shown himself to be.

What is the solution? Legislation forbidding strikes would be unenforcible without labor's coöperation. The best course would be repudiation by labor itself of its more reckless leaders. In the end, labor must be brought to abandonment of strikes until peace comes. The only good method of achieving that result is acceptance of voluntary mediation or arbitration, at least for the period of the emergency. Mr. Lewis has done his best to destroy the National Defense Mediation Board, and may have succeeded. But an alternative must be provided, as a substitute for open warfare. Labor must agree with employers and the government on some means of peaceful settlement. Lack of it will lead to bitter dissension in the nation, ending in defeat for all. Responsible labor leaders have great power; but at present ultimate exercise of it will be like exercise of the power of Samson, to bring ruin on themselves as well as others.

As for the union shop, legislation may help. Granting that membership in a union may be required as a responsibility of citizenship, it is necessary to assure the members, the employers and the public that democratic and honest government will prevail in the polity of which the workers are citizens. Unions are no longer merely private, voluntary organizations struggling for existence. They constitute a state within a state, having as large a share in the government of our economy as business corporations, and are as properly subject to regulation in the public interest. Experience has shown that many of the union leaders have abused their power.

Expert auditing and regular financial reports might well be required of all unions enjoying any form of the closed or the union shop, or indeed, of all unions which have achieved recognition and collective bargaining. The best unions already make this a practice. In addition, there should be some means of appeal for union members victimized by undemocratic leadership. The government should have the power to order and supervise elections, not only, as at present, to decide what bargaining agency the workers desire, but also to choose officials or to conduct referenda on important issues of policy, in cases where fair elections are denied by union bosses.

The union movement in this country is no longer an infant requiring protection. It has grown up physically, and if it is to conduct itself like a responsible adult it must be controlled by the same social discipline which governs the rest of the community.

To Japan: The Answer Is "No"

It looks as though Kurusu, the Japanese special envoy to Washington, might as well go home. Tojo and Togo, the Japanese Premier and Foreign Minister, have apparently blocked the way to any possible understanding with the United States by their speeches of November 16, just as Kurusu arrived in Washington. Japan insists we must stop helping China and resume full shipment of war materials to herself, including oil. In return, she makes no promises of any kind. This is an ultimatum. It must and will be decisively rejected.

It now seems clear that Japan is simply stalling for time, and the United States should put a stop to this game at once. The Japanese evidently still believe that Hitler is winning in Europe and that the longer they can wait, the better the terms they will be able to exact from us. No such thing must be permitted to happen. Our State Department, in spite of having at last stopped supplying Japan with war materials, still acts as though America were afraid of the Oriental member of the Axis. There is no reason for fear and there is every reason for prompt and resolute action.

Instead of waiting meekly for a Japanese diplomat to fly to Washington with an ultimatum, why did our government not send an American diplomat to Tokyo with final and drastic American terms and a demand for an immediate decision? Those terms should be simple: let Japan leave the Axis, withdraw from every country she has invaded, and try in future to behave like a civilized nation. Any American agreement to anything less would constitute an inexcusable and disastrous Far Eastern repetition of Munich.

Five-Ring Circus

Japan's new stand is best understood in relation to concurrent moves by Germany in Europe. As we point out on page 687, a peace offensive is in the making and, like all Axis peace offensives, its aim is not conciliation but a strengthening of the Axis front. This front has been dented—in Russia by military action, in the Mediterranean by increasing loss in troops and supplies en route to Libya, and in the United States by revision of the Neutrality Act. Hitler's response must be the straightening out of his line by bringing up reinforcements at strategic points. Japanese pressure must be exerted in the East, and simultaneously Herr von Papen must force on the Turks the idea that their function is that of a "bastion of peace" in the Mediterranean. The threat of a move into Spain is circulated once more. Above all, the relations between Germany and the Vichy government come up for reinspection and change—perhaps the most striking evidence of the Germans' concern over holding their African front without French naval and territorial assistance.

The Vichy drama is an old one, repeatedly revived with almost the same cast. First you pretend that

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France is not already completely with Hitler. Then you pretend that from this time on she will be. The only important change is that General Weygand is to be brought home from Africa. There he had offered something of a point of resistance to Hitler, though just how much, no one could be sure. When he is gone, the last opposition to the Germans in the Northwest Africa will crumble. With it will come a sickening collapse of the policy of the American State Department, which has been supplying large quantities of many important materials, including oil, to Weygand.

The Atlantic and Politics As Usual

The House vote on the revision of the Neutrality Act appears, on the surface, to be shocking proof of American disunity and of congressional indifference to democracy's fate. If as few as ten Representatives had voted no instead of aye, the United States last week would have been the Pontius Pilate among the democracies, a nation ready to wash its hands of the world's fate rather than incur risk to itself. Even as it is, the Axis is likely to see in the House vote evidence of great weakness.

Some weakness there is, but certainly less than appears at first glance. For one thing the Neutrality Act became entangled with the defense-strike issue, and some House members voted against revision in hysterical protest against union policy. Others had hoped that Congress would not be asked to eliminate the phrase, "combat zone," and sought to dodge responsibility by voting against revision. Still others waited till they were sure the resolution would go through and then voted no to curry favor with pacifist elements.

All this adds up to "politics as usual" and is a danger signal that should not go unheeded. Nevertheless, the resolution did pass, and, so far as action in the Atlantic is concerned, it doesn't matter whether the majority was 18 or 318. What does matter is that the United States, by democratic action, has taken the longest step toward Hitler's defeat since the passage of the Lease-Lend Act.

First Things First

If a Gallup poll announced this week is at all accurate, there is a deep gulf between labor's rank and file and those of its leaders who put the defense effort second to union grievances and claims. According to the Gallup poll, 67 percent of the American people think that the government should "forbid strikes in defense industries." A further poll was taken of all the principal occupational groups. In favor of forbidding defense strikes, they say, are 78 percent of the farmers; 78 percent of the business men; 72 percent of the white-collar workers; 67 percent of the professional workers; 64 percent of the skilled workers and 63 percent of the unskilled.

Elsewhere in this issue The New Republic sets forth its proposals for dealing with the menace of defense breakdowns. The overwhelming opposition to such stoppages expressed by all classes of Americans encourages the belief that fair as well as effective means can be found to ensure an end of defense strikes. The majority of Americans still put first things first.

A Labor Score Card

The New Republic's readers may be able to tell the difference between "closed shop" and "union shop" at the drop of John L. Lewis' hat, but it might be helpful in this stormy moment to run over the list of forms which union status generally takes. The Twentieth Century Fund, in the spirit of those who cry, "You can't tell the players without a score card" at football games, has compiled such a list, and we reproduce it:

Closed Shop: Only union members can be hired and workers must remain union members to retain employment.

Union Shop: Non-members may be hired, but to retain employment must become union members after a certain period.

Preferential Shop: Union members are given preference in hiring or layoff, or both.

Maintenance of Membership Shop: No one is forced to join union, but all present or future members must remain in good standing as a condition of employment.

Exclusive Bargaining Shop: The union is recognized as the exclusive bargaining agent for all employees, whether union members or not.

Bargaining for Members Only: The union is recognized as the bargaining agent only for its own members.

Heated Historians

War broke out at the meeting of the New Jersey Educational Association at Atlantic City, when Dr. Ralph A. Burns, professor of Education at Dartmouth, fired a broadside at Harvard historians for their "provincial" disregard of all lands not on the sight line of Boston, Cape Cod and the "tight little island" across the only ocean worth thinking about. Dr. Burns said that as a result of the Harvard preoccupation and the Harvard dominance in the textbook line, American youth knows nothing of "even Canada and Mexico, let alone any land south or north of those boundaries."

Columbia refused to let that be a private fight. Several Morningside Heights professors rose to say, in effect, that, good or bad, textbooks are written by Columbia men. Professor Arthur M. Schlesinger, Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History at Harvard, coldly reminded Dr. Burns that Harvard scholars did not attempt to write high-school textbooks, which made Dr. Burns mad.

Harvard's Prescott knew that Peru and Mexico lay south of the United States and he interested a great many readers in them. Harvard's Parkman looked north from Cambridge and his readers saw Canada. Whether a statistician's tally would show Harvard historians as a whole innocent or guilty of Dr. Burns's charges we

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do not know. But we agree with him when he points out that it is sad to find so many Americans wondering at this moment why on earth Russia, for example, should be considered our natural ally, when for years she has been labeled so unthinkable a land that teachers in federal district schools were forbidden by law even to mention her. And on general principle we like to see teachers get interested enough in their work to want to fight about it.

The Army and a Rumor

A rumor that the army was seeking volunteers for a new AEF spread so far and fast that the Chief of Staff has had to issue a denial. The rumor, which isolationists encouraged, had it that the army was asking selectees whether they would be willing to serve abroad, and in this was seen a secret move to prepare an expeditionary force. Africa, for some reason, was chosen by the gossips as the place where the new AEF would be sent.

General Marshall has given a quite simple and convincing explanation of what the army was doing. Because the draft law forbids selectees to serve outside the Western Hemisphere and American continental possessions, the army has been seeking volunteers, who would enlist for regular three-year terms, to garrison outlying possessions, the new Atlantic bases and Iceland. If the army had explained its perfectly legitimate undertaking in the first place there would have been no rumor and no chance for the isolationists to raise a fuss. The government in general needs to be more straightforward with the public than it has been.

Gutter Journalism

Apparently The Chicago Tribune and its friends must be badly frightened by the prospect of the new newspaper that Marshall Field III is preparing to start in Chicago. As evidence that this is true, we cite an article by Guy Richards in The New York Daily News of November 7. If American journalism has descended to a lower level of unfair personal attack in recent years, we don't know where or when. In brief, Mr. Richards charges that Mr. Field's career in journalism is all the work of a New York psychiatrist whose patient he was. The only possible answer to this kind of mud-slinging is along the lines of Lincoln's reply to those who complained that General Grant was too fond of whisky. We wish Colonel McCormick and his relative and supporter, Captain Patterson, would consult a psychiatrist. We are sure they would learn something to their advantage.

Last Week

Nations and individuals trying to escape from predicaments by pretending that they were somebody else had heavy weather of it. An Axis ship tried to make believe it was an American one and found itself under a genuine American flag but in the role of captive. . . . The Italians, playing tough, took over the Nazi hostage game, seizing 150 Yugoslavians from all parts of the country, for execution, in retaliation for an attack on Italian soldiers. But Yugoslav soldiers were reportedly in control of three-fourths of Serbia. . . . And Hitler, as the protector of religion, found his crusade getting an icy reception in all quarters, especially on the steppes of Russia.

The British, being themselves, pursued their policy of making the most revolutionary changes in British life in the mildest fashion. The King will send no Christmas cards this year. Neither will anyone else in Britain. Christmas cards have been abolished, to save paper. This action will win many friends. . . . In Conway, Arkansas, a lawyer on a cross-country trip, his car packed with luggage, books, a radio and golf clubs, put his car in gear, set the accelerator and stepped out of it. The car landed in a creek. He said he was tired of all that stuff and wanted to get rid of it. He was probably worrying about buying Christmas cards.

Hitler's European Charter

THE MOTTO FOR Americans to ponder most during the coming months is an adaptation of the Latin: "Fear the Nazis, especially when they come bringing gifts." For the fact that is emerging with ever greater clarity is that Hitler has about shot his bolt in Russia until the winter's end, that the war offensive has come to the end of a phase, and that his peace offensive is about to begin. The Russian winter will leave him time, between now and December 15, for only one more major drive all along the front from Murmansk to Rostov. It is unlikely that this would fulfill Hitler's primary aim of pushing the Russians beyond the Urals. And every such drive depletes his armies and armaments further, lengthens his supply lines, uses up precious oil and metals, buoys the hopes of conquered nations from Norway to Yugoslavia and depresses his own people to whom he has promised a speedy peace.

The Germans are probably only now beginning to understand how great was the risk Hitler took in invading Russia. But for us it is even more important to understand that Hitler must seek to break the deadlock with a peace offensive, to save not only his face but his neck as well. For if England and America should step up their aid to Russia over the winter and have it flowing in a full stream by spring, and if America should now enter the conflict, Hitler will find himself engaged in a protracted war with three powers whose armament potential is far greater than his, and who can win out in a war of factories. It is this knowledge which fortifies Stalin and the Russian people in their epic resistance, this knowledge which is shaping Churchill's policy of not exchanging the prospect of a

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long-run victory for the risk of an immediate Continental invasion, this knowledge which guides Roosevelt in his slow tactic of winning over the American minorities to a long-run anti-Nazi offensive. And it is this knowledge also that will prompt Hitler very soon to open his peace drive.

Hitler's bid for peace will not be in the form of a direct offer to either England or America. That would be too unsubtle and would defeat its own purpose. What Hitler will probably do will be to gather together the puppet leaders of the puppet Nazi states on the Continent, hold a new Congress of Vienna and issue a new European charter of order and stability. There are signs that increased pressure is being put on Vichy by Hitler's deputy in France, Otto Abetz, to join the Axis openly and give some weight to Hitler's move. There is evidence that Spain, Portugal and Switzerland have received invitations, and that they are caught between fear of accepting and terror of refusing. Reports multiply that Turkey has received an ultimatum to throw in her lot with the Nazis. And of course the Nazi puppets like Horthy and King Boris can be depended on to go along.

Having gathered them together, Hitler will compose a manifesto for a New Order in Europe, as a counterpart to the Atlantic Charter. "We are getting on fine," it will say in effect. "We shall keep the Bolshevik barbarians off our borders, preserve order internally and unite for the economic prosperity of Europe. We don't intend to attack England and America, but neither will we stand for any funny business from them. We want only to live in peace with the rest of the world."

It would be a move at once shrewd and bold. It may not come, but not only do Hitler's military necessities point to it, but it would also fit in with the character of Nazi psychological techniques up to now. For Hitler counts on the habit-fatigue of the people in the democracies, and their unwillingness to fight a war except in immediate defense against immediate military attack. He evidently hopes that, when confronted by the *fait accompli* of a united Europe under Nazi auspices, the English will accept it; and that in America the isolationists and America Firsters will be able to point to the futility and adventurism of going to war against a Europe that wants only peace. And thus Hitler will achieve what he wants now—a breathing space in which to consolidate his European gains, quell the disorders in the conquered countries and prepare a new offensive against England and America.

All this sounds neat and trim enough and streamlined according to the approved Nazi specifications. But there are several important catches in it. The first is that Hitler is reckoning without the bitterness of the Russian people against the Nazis. Even if he wants to call off the war this winter, it is by no means clear that the Russians will want to. And Hitler may find that Russian counter-attacks will engage the major part of his military forces for some time to come. Second, Hitler is reckoning without the fighting mood of the British people. And finally, he is reckoning without the awakened understanding among Americans both as to Nazis aims and Nazi means.

There can be no doubt, of course, that such a peace offensive would pick up many and powerful recruits in America. It is one of the weaknesses of the administration's leadership in the past two years that it has spoken of immediate national interest rather than of a long-range understanding of Nazi plans. And the appeasement and isolationist groups in America will exploit that fact, and shriek to the housetops that the Nazi danger no longer exists. Actually, of course, if the America First group were really that, and not an Axis First group, it would understand that the success of Hitler's scheme for a European charter would rule out the existence of even a reactionary American imperialism. This is something that the American Century group understands. Those who talk of "an independent American destiny" must be made to see that there can be no independent American destiny so long as Hitlerism has a chance to consolidate its gains and prepare its final thrust for world power.

We must be clear that Hitler's New Order is, as Mr. Roosevelt has said, neither new nor an order. It is only the old disorder of coercion and tyranny. Hitler's puppet states may look good on paper, and they may satisfy those in America or elsewhere who, being Nazi at heart, want to be satisfied that this is the pattern of the future. But the rest of us will know that America must enter the war, and join its huge strength to that of Russia and Britain, and that the only path to a New Order is the destruction of Hitlerism. We know that there will be no real New Order in Europe until a regime is established that satisfies the little men and women at the bottom of the social pyramid, and gives them hope for a substantial measure of security and freedom.

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A Journal of Opinion

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America and a Second Front

IN THE THIRD WINTER OF THE WAR, there is in Washington an extraordinary and very moving faith in the determination of the Russians to fight on. Armies which have stumbled four hundred miles in retreat to reform their lines; factory workers who have lived in poverty to strap their lathes to their backs and turn up together a thousand miles away to start again, have set standards which Americans have not known. The enthusiasm which Averill Harriman and Admiral Standley brought back from Moscow has spread through every government department.

While the Germans may, in the belief of the War Department, retreat to better winter quarters in the north and central sectors, the southern sector of the Russian front is still believed to be in acute danger. Stalingrad, Astrakhan, even Magnitogorsk are seen to be immediate German objectives. For all the wonderful organization of the Soviet government, no one believes greatly in the power of Russia-in-the-Urals to resist for long. The loss of the coal and iron of the Donbaz and Kuzbaz, the cutting off of 80 percent of Russia's oil supplies if Baku is taken, are believed to be crippling. Even the concentration of Russia's reorganized industries in the Urals may have its dangers. In Valencia, where the Spanish Loyalist government regrouped its arms factories when Madrid was endangered, the concentration of industry disorganized communications and gave Franco's air force a murderously easy task of destruction. Then, too, Stalin's words of November 9 are remembered: "We have fewer planes than the Germans. . . . We have many times fewer tanks. . . . Our losses are serious. No other nation in the world could have suffered such losses and survived." It is realized that new resources of men and materials must be brought to face the German armies at once, on every possible front.

Why have the British failed to open a second front? The reason was given very simply by Churchill late in October. "The enemy's only shortage is in the air. . . . For the rest, he retains the initiative. . . . We have not had the strength to take it from him."

As between the lightning raids which accomplish a limited objective, and withdraw, and creating a major front that will withstand the full shock of the German armies, the British believe that no invasion of Europe is worthwhile. Its only purpose would be to force the diversion of German troops from the Russian front. But the Germans are believed to have thirty divisions in garrisons in France, and another twenty in the Netherlands, which could be used to meet an invading force. An allied army of at least this size would be needed.

To be successful, a large-scale invasion of Europe requires the existence of three factors: good bases of operation; freedom of movement; and at least local superiority in men and weapons. The first of these requirements limits a British invasion at present to France and northern Europe. The second and third factors make any invasion attempt impossible today.

Freedom of movement means that Britain's bridgehead to Europe must be kept open and fully guarded. To move and supply a force of 100,000 men and perhaps 22,000 vehicles would require the diversion of a major part both of Britain's merchant marine and of her navy. Today her shortage of shipping is such that any such transfer would mean starvation at home and the severe curtailment of her armament production. Churchill, on November 12, declared that it was the shortage of shipping which made an invasion attempt "utterly beyond Britain's resources."

In an invasion of France, Britain today would possess local superiority in her aircraft arm, but not in tanks or infantry. Military observers in Washington point out that only after Dunkirk did Britain undertake to create a mass army. They insist that no such army can be sent into action without two years' training.

The one military theatre in which British action is expected is Egypt. Even here British troops are regarded today as being on the defensive. When General Wavell undertook his offensive a year ago, he moved only to forstall an Italian attack upon Egypt. The collapse of the Italians enabled him, with 30,000 men, to defeat an army of 250,000. Today the British forces in Egypt face an army of 80,000 German soldiers. They have been supplied, according to Free French observers, by 1,000,000 tons of merchant shipping in the Mediterranean, which the British navy has harried but not destroyed. To hold Egypt from this force is Britain's most vital necessity; for if Hitler captures the Mediterranean, no theatre remains in which his armies can be met. Consequently, the British are reluctant to begin an offensive which, if it failed, would open the way to a German counter-attack and perhaps the capture of Alexandria.

Yet only when the British capture Tripoli and Benghazi can they undertake an invasion of Spain, Italy or unoccupied France. Even then the German reply to an invasion, say of Sicily, would be to seize Bizerte and sever the British lines of communication. Already the mission of three Vichy generals to Algeria is seen as a move to unseat Weygand and give Bizerte to Hitler. If Hitler takes Bizerte, then a second landing by the British at Casablanca would be necessary in order to drive the Germans from Africa.

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"It is the lack of knowledge of the principles of military movement and administration—the logistics of war," General Wavell said, "which puts what we call amateur strategists wrong, not the principles of strategy which can be apprehended in a very short time by a reasonable intelligence."

The strategy of the second front is correct. The logistics remain beyond the means of the British alone.

Can we help the British? The answer, I think, is yes. While major reserves of manpower will not be needed until the democratic offensive of September, 1943, limited reserves of American soldiers now could hold the fronts in Africa and enable British troops to be transferred to meet the Germans in the Caucasus.

We have in America today a mobile force of four field armies. It is made up of regular army divisions, twenty-seven of the national guard, five armored ones and two of cavalry. These are not, of course, all fighting forces. They are fully equipped for training but not for combat, and they are not yet fully trained. Such training requires that every man works for at least a year with the weapons of his own unit, and then for six months in coördination with all other weapons. Our infantry divisions, however, have barely seen tanks in action. The tanks which these divisions possessed were taken from them to be concentrated in our new panzer divisions. Yet with a regrouping of the trained men and the weapons that we now possess, we could, without reducing our garrisons or our tank force in America, prepare an army of perhaps 100,000 men for service in Egypt. As in the last war, the stability of the sector to which they are sent would enable them to complete their training in the front lines. If, by this action, we freed 70,000 British soldiers for active service in the Caucasus, we might decisively aid Russia.

To send this force seven thousand miles to Alexandria would, of course, occupy a large part of our merchant marine and our navy. It would mean greatly reduced shipments of materials to Archangel. Is it worth it? If we were a belligerent member of an inter-allied strategy board, this question would resolve itself.

Meanwhile, as the fronts stabilize, the war becomes again, primarily one of production. We are still losing that war. Russia's admitted losses in the first six weeks of the war were 5,000 tanks, 4,000 planes and 7,000 pieces of artillery. In comparison, our production for export during that time, both for Russia and Great Britain, was perhaps 400 front-line planes, 400 tanks of all types, and 800 comparable pieces of artillery.

The entire force of the German armies failed this autumn to break the Russian lines before Moscow. If we can produce enough this winter so that Russia, despite her losses, can retain her relative strength in weapons next spring, all fronts may be held until the democratic offensive begins. One second front we must open now: It runs from Bath, Maine, to San Diego.

Washington MICHAEL STRAIGHT

The Oceans Are Ours

PEOPLE go on debating "When do we really start to fight?" while the actual question is "Where?" Do we plan to send a large army to Europe? At the present time we haven't got the ships to carry it. Do the Germans plan to send an army here? They haven't the ships either. Are we to march on Japan? Our Far Eastern bases may not hold out till then. Will Japan march on us? Her big ships couldn't reach this far.

Yet somewhere we must break the stalemate. What have we got that will do it?

We have thanked God effusively for our two oceans. But today they are more than bulwarks: they are our fronts. We are now being fought upon the line New York-Iceland-Liverpool-Archangel. At any moment we may be fought upon the double line San Francisco-Vladivostok and San Francisco-Rangoon (Chungking). There is no point in asking which front—Atlantic or Pacific—is the more vital. Cut either life-line, and one or more of our allies must fall. The answer is, both fronts are vital. Can we hold them both?

The argument is sometimes made that we could do the two jobs in tandem: that first, by switching our forces from the still peaceful Pacific, we could hurl all our strength against Germany's U-boats and vanquish them; and that then, with our vast naval accretions of 1942 and 1943 in hand, we could turn back and forever crush Japan. This argument is understood also in Berlin and Tokyo. Japan's admirals know that if they are to strike, they had better do so while part of our strength is diverted and before our new fleet is ready. That time is now.

It is probably true that we could hold the Atlantic today and the Pacific tomorrow. But that isn't the point. The question is, can we hold both oceans simultaneously, at this moment, against all combinations? The stakes are supreme. Japan is a sea power; for her oil, steel, coal and rubber she depends almost wholly on imports by sea; sea power alone can stop her. Germany is a land power; yet as long as her ships are denied the seas her huge new plant lacks outlets, and she has not won her war. Sea power, when applied on one ocean alone, has not been able to arrest the vast aggressions on land; but if that same power were to be applied on both oceans—if an iron ring could be drawn around the Axis, rather than a semicircle, and the part-

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ners were at last deprived of their exits and their entrances—the aggressions could be taken in the rear.

The success of so huge an enterprise would depend upon three conditions: first, the Allies must have on hand today a body of fighting ships that in all categories (save perhaps that of raiding submarines) vastly outnumber their enemies'; second, they must have an unbroken worldwide chain of bases from which they can deliver unremitting blows; third, they must have a shipyard capacity that will enable them not only to replace the heavy losses which such fighting would entail, but also to draw away from their enemies' topmost rate of building.

The following line-up attempts to show the numbers of Allied versus Axis ships actually in commission as of November 1, 1941. It is based upon Jane's manual, upon reliable reports of new construction, upon admissions of losses, and in a few cases upon claims of sinkings that were first denied but which seem confirmed by later evidence. Figures on destroyers and submarines must be taken as approximate.

	Capital ships	Aircraft carriers	Cruisers	Destroyers	Submarines
United States	17	7	37	175	115
British Empire	17	7	77	235	45
Netherlands Indies	0	0	4	10	15
USSR (Far East)	0	0	0	?	60?
Free France					
Poland, Norway	0	0	1	10	10
	34	14	119	430	245?
Germany	3[1]	2	10	60	175?
Italy	5	0	16[2]	95[3]	105
Japan	12	7	32[4]	126[5]	85
	20	9	58	281	365?

If these totals are correct, the Allies today are 66 percent stronger in the big ship-carrier class than the Axis, 100 percent in cruisers and 50 percent in destroyers. Besides, the Allies can muster more than twelve hundred escort vessels, corvettes, minesweepers, aircraft tenders, patrol ships, sub-chasers and converted merchantmen—a margin of probably 400 percent.

But the contrast of numbers is made even greater by the contrast in fighting worth and range. The thirty-four Anglo-American battleships, for instance, could operate interchangeably or together on any ocean: they are built to a common plan of high fuel capacity, slow speed, heavy armor and great sea-keeping strength, and their commanders are linked by language and professional doctrine. The twenty Axis ships, on the other hand, form nothing approaching a coherent whole. The Italian battleships—the new as well as the old—are designed only for short-distance work in the Mediterranean; the German ships, of assorted sizes, are intended either for North Sea defense or as lone raiders, and really do not constitute a blue-water fleet at all; and both the German and Italian commands (at least so far as their surface vessels are concerned) labor under a knowledge of inferiority and past defeat.

The Japanese fleet is of another order: it consists of uniform divisions of powerful battleships supported by fine cruisers and commanded by an aggressive admiralty. But here again mere figures are deceptive: while Japan's aircraft carriers, for instance, match ours in number, they are far inferior to ours in capacity, speed and efficiency. Like the German and Italian surface fleets, the Japanese fleet was designed chiefly for service in home waters; the ships have much smaller steaming ranges than ours, and the four old battleships of the Kongo class are so lightly armored that an admiral might hesitate to put them into the thick of a fleet fight.

Thus, instead of being compelled to look upon the Axis as a united host threatening a loose-knit team of scattered Allies, in naval terms we can look upon the Axis as the very opposite: a scattered group incapable of uniting its sea power or of operating in force on the surface at any great distance from home, and subject to attack by overwhelming concentrations of Anglo-American strength. The problem is simply where to apply that strength.

Today only half of it is being applied. Up until last week, when the Neutrality Act was revised, less than half was being applied. Our ships did indeed support Britain on the western reaches of the Atlantic; but they were prevented—since non-belligerent naval vessels had no business to go where their merchantmen could not—from taking up essential front-line positions in waters nearer Europe. They were encouraged to fight off the raiders which had ventured forth a thousand miles or so to sea; but they were restrained from helping to bottle them up at the points from which they or their supply ships started: the Norwegian coast from Egersund to Namsos, the Breton coast from Lorient to St. Nazaire, and the fake "neutral" harbors from Ferrol to Las Palmas and Dakar.

These half-measures are now being struck from the Atlantic; but they still prevail upon the Pacific. There, while we adhere to a tenuous neutrality, our great fleet stands idle at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, while Japan extends herself and Britain lacks the ships to secure imperiled Singapore. The vast might of Anglo-American sea power has not yet been massed; and inevitably, for so long as we fail to launch a concerted sea offensive, the initiative must remain with the spread-out, inferior Axis.

It is not merely that Britain needs our naval tonnage. At certain points we need Britain's. The real need is a

[1] Including the Gneisenau, reported virtually wrecked after repeated bombing, but excluding the pocket-battleships Admiral Scheer and Lützow, which are listed under the more proper category of cruisers. [2] Including the Gorizia, claimed sunk but denied, and excluding twelve 3,300-ton light cruisers which are reported to be near completion. [3] Excluding old torpedo boats. [4] Excluding mine-layers, gunboats and obsolete coastal ships carried on Japanese lists as "cruisers." [5] Excluding torpedo boats.

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general one on the part of all the Allies for particular types of tonnage at one point, and for other types at another. This is another way of saying that our naval strengths can no longer be reckoned upon purely national bases: since the fronts are common, the forces may have to be so too.

Here is a case in point: Britain, with only eight Italo-German capital ships to face her seventeen, does not need to keep all her big units in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. She can spare some of them for Singapore, where their presence would at once inhibit Japan's southward advance. The Prime Minister indeed, wants to base a whole squadron there. But he cannot do it unless he can support them by a strong force of smaller ships. Of these, however, Britain has desperately few to spare. The simple answer would seem to be, let Britain keep her big fellows at home and take care of the Atlantic, and we'll take care of the Pacific.

But that still wouldn't take care of vital Singapore. Our fleet could steam out there readily enough; yet in so doing it would remove itself by 8,500 miles from the home coast and leave Japan's forces ranging freely athwart its communications with Hawaii. No admiral in his senses would try it. But what he could do would be to dispatch some of his light ships and planes to support a British battlewagon force at Singapore. Our navy has eight-inch cruisers designed for detached work, and the world's biggest and best seagoing aviation.

To do this would change the picture entirely. With Malaya at last well guarded, the admiral would become more confident of his chances of holding the Philippines as well; thus assured, he might decide in case of war not to write off our small Manila-based Asiatic force as a kind of suicide squadron, but rather to enforce it, intending to threaten Japan's flank and raid her commerce. And if he took these forward positions, the other Allies in turn could support him: the Dutch from the Indies and the Russians from Siberia.

The Pacific line-up then might look something like this: the Japanese fleet standing alone against a surrounding Allied aggregation consisting of a Singapore striking force (say three British battleships, a carrier and cruisers), a Manila striking force (an American fast battleship, a carrier, plus cruisers, destroyers, submarines), a Dutch supporting force (see table for size), a Vladivostok raiding force (see ditto), and the distant American Pacific fleet (say ten battleships and their escorts). The rival strengths—counting in the efficient British, Dutch and Russian air fleets—might stack up in air power to 5 to 4 or possibly even 3 to 2 in our favor, and in weight of big-gun broadside to about 230,000 pounds for the Allies as against 176,000 pounds for Japan—a promising ratio for any American admiral.

The need on the Atlantic is different entirely. The call here is not for heavy squadrons prepared to slug it out, but for small, sturdy craft to shepherd convoys and to relieve the British on sentry-go. There is another difference: while Japan's naval threat in the Pacific would justify us in keeping our main Pacific force at home base in Hawaii, the fact that no Axis power is able to attack our Atlantic coast calls upon us to move our Atlantic ships forward into positions nearer action.

Let us see then how our Atlantic strength shapes up, with the navy freed from its strings. We have available for this side 50 to 70 destroyers, whose effectiveness will increase greatly once they are based upon such action-points as Belfast, Gibraltar, Bathurst and Freetown, West Africa; and new vessels of the tough, thirty-seven-knot Kearny class are going into service at the rate of two or three a month. Then we have some forty old coastal submarines—of only minor usefulness off our own Atlantic coast—which may do invaluable work by keeping a periscope watch in Channel and Gibraltar waters. We have cutters for the high North and icebreakers for Archangel (the Coast Guard alone has 290 seagoing vessels); and, because we are still short of cruisers, we have thrown together an auxiliary fleet that includes everything from converted fast merchantmen and aircraft-carrying freighters to made-over yachts. (Of such craft we are commissioning 260 this year alone.)

We have several great aircraft-carriers to perform transatlantic sweeps, and we can contribute two to four strong battleships—plus several second-string ones, if we choose to risk them—in case the Vichy-French fleet finally sails forth on Hitler's bidding and shakes Britain's hold on the Mediterranean. But on this ocean the role of our big ships is secondary: they are the supporters of our smaller ones. The fact that we have secured our Pacific front with the bulk of them enables us safely to throw our huge production of light craft into the Atlantic. And perhaps the most important single fact about the war at sea is that although Germany is still sinking merchantmen at a somewhat faster rate than they can be replaced, Britain and the United States together are turning out anti-submarine vessels at about ten times the rate at which Germany is sinking them. This means simply that each convoy that crosses the Atlantic has a better chance of adequate protection than the one which preceded it.

The Allies have the ships and they have the bases. But the member that has the ships is not always the one that has a place to put them. From Murmansk to Scapa Flow to Iceland around to Gibraltar and Alexandria and down to Singapore and Surabaya and then up past Manila (with Pearl Harbor deep below the horizon) to the Aleutian and Siberian Islands and Vladivostok, we have a four-flag chain of strongholds with which we can encircle the Axis and finally, if total strength is exerted, lock it in. But to exert this total strength means to share it. We shall have to pool not only our bases but our fleets as well. Japan's battleship threat calls for a reply with our massed Allied

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big-ship forces; Germany's U-boat threat calls for a reply with all our concerted anti-submarine forces. If the Allies merge their whole strength—holding nothing back to serve particular interests or special prides—they have the tonnage in hand with which to crush the challengers on both fronts.

This all-out effort cannot be cheaply made. The Axis submarine power will continue to exact a high toll; indeed, even when Germany surrendered in 1918, she still had almost two hundred U-boats. But the final, reassuring fact is that Allied shipyards together are producing a warship replacement tonnage which is several times the highest the Axis can attain. Germany, Italy and Japan among them are building probably eight battleships; we and Britain have twice that many now on the ways, with seven more in the designers' lofts. The Allies expect to put half a dozen aircraft carriers into service in the next year or two; the Axis, one. Japan may be working on twenty destroyers; the United States is building or planning two hundred. In these figures you can read the future.

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE

A National Labor Policy

JOHN L. LEWIS' Samson act has so badly weakened the pillars which hold up the temple of sanity that it seems probable that we shall have compulsory legislation regulating the activities of labor unions. The hysteria on Capitol Hill has reached a new height, unequaled even by the furies of last March over Allis-Chalmers or of last June, when the Communists shut down North American.

The chief hog-callers are to be found in the conservative Southern Democratic bloc, the greatest whoopers-up for Hitler's scalp. Somehow they appear to think that the way to beat fascism abroad is to establish it at home. The opening phrase of their speeches invariably is, "As a consistent supporter of the President's foreign policy. . . ." Then they go on to outline such methods of speeding the defense program as five-year jail sentences or concentration camps for pickets, though the blue-ribbon bellow is still Hatton W. Summers' call last March for the electric chair.

Only forthright action by the administration will ward off a legislative blow at the solar plexus of defense—the morale of our army in the factories. The hotheads of March were cooled off by the creation of the National Defense Mediation Board and its forty-eight-hour settlement of the Allis-Chalmers strike. In June the crisis was brushed aside by bayonets, and by Philip Murray's decisive action.

A new and far more menacing crisis has now been created by Murray's action in withdrawing CIO members from the Mediation Board. As this is written, the outcome of the struggle between Lewis and the administration is not clear, but it appears certain that nothing can stave off restrictive legislation this time except the announcement by the administration of a comprehensive labor policy which calls for concessions from labor as well as from management.

Some of the less hardy New Dealers have decided that, legislation being inevitable, the only thing to do is to try to guide it. They talk in terms of a mild copy of the Railway Labor Act containing a "cooling-off" provision and saying nothing about jails or concentration camps. To steer something mild through Congress at this point would be like trying to swim a harbor infested with sharks.

Some legislation may actually be needed. But no law, however sane, could possibly be an adequate substitute for a policy which was agreed upon in advance by labor and management. One of the Mediation Board's troubles can be traced to the fact that American industry does not consider decisions by the Board to be binding upon other employers. The Air Associates case in Bendix, New Jersey, is a good example. Cyrus Ching, vice-president of the United States Rubber Company and employer member of the board, was vociferous in his denunciation of the company's tactics. But no industrialist outside the board spoke a word of censure. This difficulty did not beset the War Labor Board in 1918, since it was called upon to enforce a policy agreed upon in advance by American industry.

The same result could be achieved this time through a defense labor policy arrived at by collective bargaining in a conference composed equally of labor and employer representatives. The CIO and the AFL should pick their own delegates to such a conference. The National Association of Manufacturers, the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Industrial Conference Board could be relied upon to choose the industry representatives. The NICB did this in the last war.

There has been a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding concerning the plans and policies which guided the War Labor Board in 1918, and perhaps it would be worthwhile, at this point, to sketch the highlights. In answer to a request by the Council of National Defense, the National Industrial Conference Board, on September 6, 1917, submitted a six-point labor policy for use during the war emergency and suggested that this policy be adopted by employers throughout the country and by the American Federation of Labor. The Council of National Defense on January 19, 1918, recommended that the Secretary of Labor call a conference of twelve persons representing

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employers' organizations, employees' organizations and the public "for the purpose of negotiating agreements for the period of the war, having in view the establishment of principles and policies which will enable the prosecution of production without stoppage of work." In accordance with this suggestion the Secretary of Labor on January 28 wrote the NICB and the AFL calling upon them each to pick five persons. Each group was to name a sixth to represent the public. These twelve persons were to comprise the War Labor Conference Board, which would convene to work out principles and policies to govern employer-employee relations. This board recommended on March 29, 1918, the setting up of the War Labor Board, which was to be guided by a set of principles and policies worked out by collective bargaining at the conference.

A comparison between the original policies suggested by the National Industrial Conference Board in its memo to the Council of National Defense on September 6, 1917, with the final policies adopted after the conference with the AFL representatives, shows how much give and take there was between the two groups. The NICB's policies said nothing about guaranteeing the right of workers to organize, which was incorporated in the final document. They suggested that wages be frozen at the level in effect at the beginning of the war and only modified to "meet any demonstrated advance in the cost of living." The final wage policy guaranteed workers "a living wage."

As to hours, they recommended the same freezing, at the level in existence at the beginning of the war, "subject to change only when in the opinion of the Council of National Defense it is necessary to meet the requirements of the government." The policy eventually agreed upon called for the eight-hour day, with certain exceptions.

Many of the editorial writers who are now recommending blandly that the Mediation Board should follow the policy of the War Labor Board and freeze the status of the open and closed shop fail to realize what a tremendous concession the employers made before to win labor's assent to the freezing of wages and hours. As pointed out above, they guaranteed labor the right to organize. To realize what an important concession it was at that time, one has only to remember that seventeen years after this policy was adopted, it was so much the exception rather than the rule that Congress had to pass the Wagner Act to establish it.

In the last war the issue of the closed shop was not very important. Labor was in an embryonic state of organization and the records of the War Labor Board show that it had ten times as many cases involving the right to organize as it had concerning the closed shop. Today the situation has changed. The right to organize is established by law. Organized labor is growing, and since, fortunately, we live in a dynamic world, we should face this growth realistically. Thus we are confronted with the problem of finding some concession which employers would be willing to make in return for freezing the status of the open or closed shop.

There is considerable ground for believing that this question can be compromised. If you analyze the demands of labor for the union or the closed shop, you will find that it is essentially a demand for some form of security and is based on a long experience with employer opposition to unionism. One of the reasons why the closed shop is an issue in this country, whereas it is not in England, can be found in the difference between the two countries in employer attitude toward labor. Labor remembers bitterly what happened to it after the last war when a nationwide open-shop drive by employers succeeded in cutting the American Federation of Labor down to less than half its wartime strength. If one reads labor's mind aright, it does not want this to happen again and it is out to get the closed shop in this emergency in order to ensure its survival when the crisis is over.

The experience of the Mediation Board in a great many cases where the demand for a union shop has been strong shows that what the workers really wanted was security. That demand for security has been satisfied in a great many of these cases by the mere statement on the part of the employer that he approves of his employees' becoming members of the union. Can this whole drive for the union shop, which seems to be essentially a drive for union security, be satisfied by a declaration by employers throughout the country that they approve of their employees' becoming members of the union which represents a majority in the plant? Other suggestions come to mind, but the important fact is that there is enough statesmanship in labor and management in this country and at this time to find a compromise and to abide by it.

America made a great mistake after the last war when it took a different course from the one followed by the nations of Western Europe. In this country we retrogressed. Practically every other civilized nation went forward to a period of mature industrial relations. England today owes her survival in great part to the wisdom of those who decided that her national policy in the twenties should be to encourage the organization of labor. As a result, when Dunkirk arrived, the British had a strong, well knit, responsible and ably led labor movement which was able and willing to carry its load in staving off what seemed inevitable defeat. More important, possibly, was the fact that the representatives of labor and management had been sitting at the same bargaining table for twenty years and knew not only how to get along with one another but how to cooperate in a common enterprise. That mutual respect and trust has paid high dividends to the British people and it is the goal toward which we should aim in this country. We have started twenty years behind, but, if we really put our minds to it, we cannot fail.

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A conference, such as is suggested above, would be a more difficult job than in 1918. Labor has won most of the War Labor Board's policies in the past twenty-three years by collective bargaining and by such laws as the Wagner Act, the wages-and-hours law and hundreds of statutes governing working conditions, both federal and state. This would undoubtedly be a conference at which labor would be called upon to do a little giving. In return for security and a guarantee by employers to abide by decisions of the Labor Board without resort to the delaying tactics of litigation, unions would be asked to use conciliation and mediation machinery instead of the strike, would be required, in turn, to abide by the board's decisions instead of using force to circumvent the Wagner Act. They would have to outlaw organizational, dues-collection and jurisdictional strikes and coöperate with the government in making stabilization pacts, industry by industry.

Out of these industry-stabilization agreements might come that long-sought-after state of things called industrywide collective bargaining, which has brought so much peace and stability to the British and, for the most part, to those few industries in this country which have really tried it, such as clothing, the railroads and glass.

And one of the beauties of such a conference would be its effect on the hog-callers. No legislation would get very far in Congress while the conference was in session. If it were successful, the only legislation we would see would be sane and constructive.

Such a policy would undoubtedly lighten the task of the Mediation Board, which currently worries that any case may eventually wind up in the President's lap. And no one seriously believes that taking over plants solves any problems. The Board could be the instrument for enforcing whatever policy is adopted. Industry and labor are no exceptions to the generalization that human beings follow rules better when they have drawn them themselves.

Such a conference and its predicted results will build no millennium. As William H. Davis, chairman of the Mediation Board, told a luncheon of the Survey Associates the other day, "industrial relations are human relations and there will be no millennium for human relations on this earth." But it can be a forward step in the long road to mature stability. The alternative to such positive action by the administration is trouble within the arsenal of democracy.

ALAN WALKER

War Profits

IV. *Ferdinand, the Bull Market*

SUPPOSE THAT, in the summer of 1939, you had advance information about the outbreak of the war. Suppose also that, acting on this information, you had bought on August 24, 1939, one million dollars' worth of common stocks on the New York stock market. On November 1, 1941, twenty-six months after your information had been proved correct your investment would have shown a loss of $103,000.[1] For in a little more than two years of war, the stock market has been through a decline of approximately 10 percent. The market reached its wartime low in June, 1940, following the collapse of the French army and Dunkirk, but in the last week of October, 1941, one of the market's frequent sinking spells left it very little above its Dunkirk level.

Yet, during the course of the Second World War, the price of almost everything—except stocks—has gone up. Since the beginning of the defense program, the price advances have been so substantial that the problem of preventing a runaway inflation is occupying many of Washington's best minds. Many 1929 production records (steel production, for example) are being broken and various indices of business activity stand far above their 1929 highs. The war has run true to form in bringing a boom, but to this boom the stock market has been a stranger.

In any period of inflation stocks (and other commodities) are usually considered preferable to cash, since in any such period a given amount of cash buys a smaller amount of commodities. As Frank Sullivan, writing in PM, puts it, "it now takes five men's meat to make another man's poison." Yet common stocks, perhaps the most sensitive of all commodities, have moved in a direction opposite to that taken by nearly every other article for which money can be exchanged.

The market is not merely a declining market. It is also a market which is so dull as to be almost dead. Back in 1939, Wall Street brokers were acutely unhappy about the low turnover in shares. But 1940 was much less active than 1939, and 1941 has been much worse than either of the preceding years. Trading for the first ten months of 1941 was about one-half the volume for the same period in 1939 and about two-thirds the volume for the same period in 1940. The daily average turnover has been about 450,000 shares, and anything less than a million-share day is considered a calamity by those whose living depends upon commissions from shares bought and sold. The "Scotch vacation" (*i. e.*, without pay) has been only one of many

[1] Provided you had bought the thirty industrial stocks whose average price is published daily by the Dow-Jones company. The Dow-Jones averages are accepted as a standard index of the market.

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devices by which brokers have attempted to survive the market doldrums.

Even corporate profits have not been the determining factor in the prices of corporate securities. In 1940, large corporations (such as have their shares listed on the Exchange) made nearly 20 percent more money than they made in 1939. Thus far in 1941, they are running about 25 percent above 1940 levels, and their profits for the current year should not be much less than their profits in 1928. But stock prices were lower in 1940 than in 1939 and are lower today than they were in 1940. The big companies today are, for the most part, prosperous. But their prosperity is not reflected in the market value of their stocks.

Stock prices are usually figured on the basis of the number of dollars of profit per share of stock. A company with a net income of $3,000,000 and with 1,000,000 shares of stock outstanding is making $3 per share. There is an old rule-of-thumb which says that a stock should sell at around "ten times earnings"—that is, if a company makes (or "earns") $3 a share, its stock should be quoted at about $30 a share. This rule is of course very rough and general, but it is an accepted principle that as the dollars-per-share increase, the stock price should move up. And even this basic axiom has been violated by the stock market of today.

The steel industry, for instance, is an obvious war baby, making about two and a half times as much as it made in 1939. But few steel stocks are selling at ten times earnings and even fewer are priced in proportion to their profit increases. The U. S. Steel Corporation, for instance, made $8.85 a share in 1940. On the ten-times-earnings basis, it should have sold at $88.50 a share, whereas it actually fluctuated between a high of $76 and a low of $42. And 1941 has brought a much wider discrepancy between profit and price. U. S. Steel is making money at the rate of $11.60 for the full year and might therefore be expected to sell at about $116 a share. But, in 1941, U. S. Steel common has sold at from $49 to $70 a share and was recently quoted at $52. The company is making about $8 this year for every $5 in 1940, but the stock has never reached its 1940 high and is not very much above its 1940 low.

Other steel stocks show the same tendency. Bethlehem, which should make $10 a share on the year, has been selling around $62. National Steel, which ought to earn nearly $9 a share, is just over the $50 mark, although its 1940 low was $49. Youngstown Sheet and Tube, which may clear $11 a share, has sold between $30 and $42, with recent sales at $34—or hardly more than three times probable earnings. Yet Youngstown made $9,342,000 in the first six months of 1941 compared to $2,423,000 in the first six months of 1940.

It is true that the war boom has been "selective," that is, many companies not directly affected by the defense program are making no more money today than they made in 1940 and some (mostly because of increased taxes) are making less. The electric-light-and-power industry, for instance, which has a relatively fixed gross income, is generally showing somewhat smaller profits this year than last. The Telephone Company, which made $204,000,000 for the twelve months ending August 31, 1940, was down to a mere $201,000,000 for the twelve months ending August 31, 1941. And railroad stocks have sold at bargain prices because speculators have been terrified by the possibility of higher railroad wages or a railroad strike. But although a roaring bull market with all stocks making new highs is not to be expected, the presence of a bear market (so far as there can be said to be any market at all) is even more difficult to understand.

What is keeping the market so dull and down? There are two sets of reasons—the tangible and the psychological. The tangible reasons are based on the fact that large increases in sales are not accompanied by correspondingly large increases in profit. In many industries, prices are being controlled by the government, usually through a gentleman's agreement rather than through a formal proclamation, but quite effectively controlled nevertheless. Copper, for instance, has become practically a rare metal, but it is selling for 12 cents a pound, a very modest increase over its pre-war price. But 12-cent copper does not make the copper producer happy; Anaconda, indeed, recently shut down one of its many mines in protest against the 12-cent "ceiling." Steel is still selling at exactly its pre-war price ($24 a ton), a fact which presumably reflects the administration's influence with the U. S. Steel Corporation. Stabilized prices take much of the fun out of even large increases in dollar-sales. Yet—as the steel industry itself has demonstrated—a larger volume will produce a greater profit without a higher price.

The excess-profits tax is the greatest single factor in the prevention of a strong market. At the current rates of taxation, a company with no exemption would pay income taxes (excess profits and normal) equal to nearly 75 percent of its profit-before-tax. All companies have some exemption, and many companies have altogether too much exemption. But where a company has already gone far beyond its exemption, any further increase in profit will unquestionably benefit the United States Treasury more than it benefits the corporate stockholders.

Hence the financial press is now complaining that a ceiling has been placed on profits and that corporations cannot possibly make any more money in 1942 than they are making in 1941. But this statement is true only of companies showing a great wartime increase in net income, and no company can pay big excess-profits taxes without having big excess profits on which to pay. The Wall Streeter, however, pays little attention to the doughnut because his attention is centered on the hole. The psychological factors which have had a bearish influence can be summed up in the word *fear*. President

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Roosevelt has matched Hitler's "war of nerves" with a campaign designed to disturb the mental equilibrium of the Nazis; but the Wall Street morale is distinguished chiefly by the rapidity with which it yields to attack from any quarter. Thus, generally speaking, the market goes down when the Germans make progress and stiffens a little when the Russians slow down the Nazi drives. But the sinking of the Reuben James (hardly an event which could be interpreted as improving Hitler's prospects) produced a general (although far from violent) market weakness in which the chief declines were made by Bethlehem Steel Common and Atlas Powder Preferred—two notable war babies whose position should be strengthened by the closer approach of full-scale hostilities. But the market, frightened by the thought of peace, is almost equally frightened by the thought of war; tired of livin' and scared of dyin', it barely manages to keep itself rollin' along.

Among the things that the market is afraid of, the future seems to be the most fearsome. Business men are apparently convinced that there will be a prompt and disastrous post-war depression.[1] That such a conviction amounts to an admission that the profit system cannot yield satisfactory profits under normal (*i.e.*, peacetime) conditions does not seem to have occurred to the business man. He would, however, probably argue that the profit system could produce something approaching adequate profits if it were assisted by a federal government encouraging low wages and fixed prices, substituting sales taxes for income taxes and in general following the deflationary policies which nearly ruined the country under Hoover.

As things stand, however, the business man fears that the war will prolong the rule of the Democratic Party. He looks forward to a post-war world distinguished by a resumption of large-scale relief payments, by continued high taxes (without which payments on the war debt could hardly be made), and by a large number of vaguely defined but no less terrifying "socialistic experiments." Thus the more world-minded and class conscious industrialist merely drifts.

On the day after the loss of the Reuben James, the leading editorial in The Wall Street Journal dwelt on the horrors of war; said that the American people have been "tricked" into "almost" entering the present conflict; hoped that this calamity might yet be avoided; and ran off into a denunciation of the CIO for (among other things) interfering with the defense program. This war is not a Wall Street war, because taxes have interfered with the enjoyment of profits and because President Roosevelt is the American Commander-in-Chief. But neither is the prospect of peace alluring, because the Wall Streeter admits that the current rate of industrial activity cannot long survive the removal of the war stimulus. So even record sales, rising prices, high profits and some quite spectacular per-share earnings have not lessened the Wall Street gloom.

E. D. KENNEDY

[1] There should not be an immediate post-war depression because of the effective demand for curtailed consumer goods, of which automobiles and houses are two examples.

Land of Dreams, and Nightmares

To a sizable bulk of our population, Hollywood is where you go when you die, if you're good. To some of our more impatient critics, Hollywood is where you die if you go there. It is a most complex place to report on, and in this series of articles I have surely not even brushed a good third of the business of picture-making, in one respect or another. There are territories left out. There are the endless score sheets in composer's row and the always last-minute hustle over there to get the music out after the film has been made and cut—to get it broken down, sequence by sequence and scene by scene, each shift of mood, place or action timed to the second and written in on a rehearsed master sheet, with its demand of music to fit and get it up, where is it, why not. There are the overtime sessions on the recording stage, when the score has been written, arrangements made and the band tired in shirt sleeves and the director looking at his watch, looking at the control room, waiting for the film to flash on the screen preceded by the metronome beat and numbers shifting with it: 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 *and* in, the men in the band with their single earphone apiece getting the exact tempo for that stretch of action, and then that little stretch of music played once and played again, rephrased here or there and played over, all for just, say, the bridge into a song in a musical, for a strain under the credit titles of the film, for the establishment of a new mood, whether of snow or of city traffic. And the composer sweating, watching his men and the inexorable numbers on the screen, watching the score and the clamped-down faces in the control room.

And there is the quiet and incomprehensible activity of the art department, with its draftsmen and painters and model builders, filling room after room with scheme and replica, running up a coal mine or a wooded hill in the time it would take you to describe it, establishing the key of a scene with charcoal, crayon, watercolor, scaling a point of action down to inches so that the director may study his moves even as the set is being built. The art department starts as soon as a script has been decided on, and it makes so much of the picture in stills and models that its work for any one show

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could be made a traveling exhibit, of craftsmanship and care and feeling, too, a background for motion, almost alive in itself.

Following these specifications, there are the veterans on the sets, running you up a house or a tree, a gravel drive or a pasture slope, as neat in each case as you please. They are here today, before they or anybody knows what the picture is about, busy with saw and hammers and guy wires to the tying-off position on the parallels, with paint and shrubbery and paper flowers; tomorrow, when the cameras and lights roll up to look at the first scene, over and over, they are gone, leaving their portion of a city or a canyon ready and solid behind them. No amateur who has ever tried to saw and angle without a mitre-box will fail to delight in this fairyland carpentry where men build only for the illusion but with the speed of illusion. A seat is too low for the effect desired, but cannot be mounted on a box that would show in the camera: within twenty minutes the cushion has been taken off and a wooden riser built and fitted to its curves, stained and secured in place, ready. A door has to open without human aid, and in ten minutes a heavy thread is run out and over a pulley and back, and painted dull black so the camera won't pick it up. A director wants a shot from floor level, and before you know it they have sawed through the planking and established a base for the camera on its dolly three feet below. If you have any idea of what you want, all you have to do is ask them.

Of course there are the actors. They are important in pictures, but by the process of identification are made much more important than they should be. Actually they are at the mercy of the story they are put in, the director who uses them to tell it, and in a lesser but still important way they are at the mercy of costume designers, cameramen, etc. But they are the part of Hollywood on which speculation and gossip focuses most brilliantly and their contribution to the art of pictures is immediately visible to all. Pictures demand of them first, that they should have that quality which stands up under the camera eye and lives to project itself out from the shadows of the screen into the imagination of an audience; second, that they have a bounty of patience, of willingness before instruction, above all, of a hardihood of imagination and belief in the fragment that must be run over and over until it is natural and right. You know all about them, or less than nothing about them, by the evergreen life-stories in every kind of journal using movable type. A lot of them are just tired stage actors, doing it the easy way; but some of them are developed for and by the movies, and some of them are very good people. Alongside the flat braveries of Errol Flynn you must put Gary Cooper, to be fair. And you will not forget, I hope, the lank, eager, common-man sweetness of Henry Fonda, whose Abe Lincoln was so high and far above the studied caricature of Raymond Massey that it is not to talk. Sometimes in the movies the free and honest is released as it is nowhere else, needing only a shrewd director and a sensible story; and for every foolish star, exploded into a million dollars by virtue of the public thirst for new personality and new types of brassière, you will find someone plugging along, believing in the thing, worrying over it, trying to do it the best way. They are rarely bright copy but they are there, the movies in their general faceless all-inclusive way having made them because they need them.

The scoring of music is something the movies have not developed to a point where they know what to do about it, and certainly the question is still one of the most difficult, to the composers as well as to the audience. Fanfares, heavy orchestration, lack of imagination obtrude on almost any film story you think of, yet anything in the way of delicacy and restraint is ruled out of most productions on the ground of lack of appeal. Normally intended to underline or even set up a mood, music often comes to have the oppposite effect of diverting the attention if not actually pouring over the edge of dramatic necessity into its own puddle of splendor. Composers wrestle sometimes with the demands of the form, but they are too often cut down by some chump from the front office, if not in intention then in the matter of budget, because the front office either knows what it likes or what the whole world likes, as represented of course by some blowsy homebody of a wife.

And there is so little chance of a progressive, continuous and memorable composition in furnishing chords now for a hurricane and next minute for Nelson Eddy, that the boys all too quickly find the easiest course to be that of swimming with the current, giving the boobs what they want, and overloading the microphone at every point of European action by sitting the brass section for the 1812 Overture no more than ten feet away from it. And if a composer does get a score he fancies he can work on in an original way, who is to blame him for pushing the music at the expense of theatre continuity, using the main business of the picture itself as an excuse or suggestion for his themal development, until sometimes a country garden takes on the aspect of a mixture of a Legion convention and the Albert Hall.

Nobody has sufficiently explored this field, though Oscar Levant and Virgil Thomson have dropped a few pertinent and acid notes by the way; nobody has been allowed to; and though no action can seem to happen in its natural silence any more (Fritz Lang got the reputation of reverting to the Ufa days of the silents when he took scenes in "Man Hunt" with nothing but the breathing of people and the trickle of water, as they should exactly be heard for the full effect), most of the picture makers accept as incessant that which should be incidental. There is no near-remedy or an-

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swer. We cannot get decent scoring of pictures until we somehow breed a type of man who will have the enormous background and training of a good musician, plus the understanding and appreciation of the film at large.

There are also the nicest people in the world, all the people on the set from actual manual labor to script girls, who make the majority, the majority you have to depend on for pictures if not glamor. It is the place they live and work in, and what if crazy things happen in the papers or even actually? They have their homes, they head out for them at the end of the hard day for supper. Maybe they go to a movie, though it is not a movie-mad town and the audiences you find in theatres are a cross between the very wise ("Look at him faking that one, with the tree; the dope forgets it's an elm to start with, look at him, and what's he making a week?") and the unalert or dumb. Most of the technicians have made or seriously wish to make a profession or trade out of it, as you would with machine-tool making or draftsmanship. In it they are happy, and their carefree wisdom in the midst of bewilderment is contagious—I believe it is the main thing, above the money, which makes the long day on the set tolerable. I've said how efficient they are, how unobtrusive in their steady realization of the miracle in such matters as device, weight, time, speed. Hollywood has built up a new ideal in craftsmanship, where to speak a mean word or to be discourteous to the most obvious dope of a stranger, would be an ill thing.

The cameramen there is no space for in any such brief report on an industry so highly technical and ramified. Their mystery is well preserved if only because they have learned the values and intricate means of reproduction of the still camera while appreciating and absorbing the principles of motion, of running emphasis, contrasting moods of fiction. It is said about them simply and finally that you may prefer one man's style to another's, you may have people you do or don't like to work with, but you can't work on an "A" picture and get an "A" cameraman who isn't a veteran in his art, who doesn't know more about what you think you're doing than you do, and who won't turn you in just as good a picture as you are able to see in your mind and pass on to him in the way of communication.

It is always pleasant to speculate about what Hollywood Needs Most, and indeed one of the trade magazines makes a yearly feature out of inviting several hundred film reviewers to tell what is wrong and what they think ought to be done. With the industry set up as it is, catering successfully to millions at a profit of millions, there is little to be hoped for in the way of easy miracles, and what energy is at the disposal of reform movements is almost invariably misled, being misinformed in the first place (the most recent large example is the fuss about block-booking: block-booking was done away with and now the very exhibitors who kept the howl going don't like the result; and as for any change in the quality of pictures, don't ask).

The best thing to hope for is a complete shake-up, some basic shock in the financial relation of pictures to public. It would not be an easy cure for anybody and it certainly wouldn't be complete. But it could achieve what you could never get by asking: the low-budget picture as a general rule, and the low-budget picture means junking expensive stars and fantastic story costs. It also means—if it is low enough and imperative enough—the return of ingenuity to the films. The films were in the hardiest period of their growth when directors had to scrabble and make-do under severe handicaps, when they couldn't employ five or six Name writers of no talent but great salary potential, when they weren't carrying the load of a so-called producer whose salary for six months, let alone his bungling, exceeded the necessary cost of the picture. Now and again someone makes a small picture which is also a good one, and he doubles his cost with ease. But the man is running counter to the industry as it normally operates today, and he is retired soon enough from competition by being given a fat job with one of the majors as assistant something in charge of something.

The immediate hope is that the men who are getting a bellyful of the machine set-up, who know a story when they see one and how to go about making a film from it, will get the resolution and the money to come forward with the old United Artists idea, now in decay. They would be directors and director's writers (as opposed to such blown-up nonentities in film as, say, James Hilton or Phil Stong). They would take less money and take more time, and if there were only four or five of them they would turn out a half-dozen moderately good pictures a year. The pictures would be distributed, for only the most ferocious boycott can hold its own with eternal and insistent demand of theatre operators for product, for the thing their neighborhood and all the neighborhoods will lay down their coins to see, whether it has been advertised and premiered or not. There isn't a good director or a good writer in Hollywood who doesn't tear his hair over what the front office has done to his story now, and more because of this than because of the nature of things, the front offices will eventually have to take a back seat. They can't make pictures, and that's the size of it. They can throw millions around and they can draw lackeys like flies, but they can't make the pictures, and without pictures they die. I should not be surprised if there were not going on right now, slowly and with no concerted front, something like the managerial revolution in films. With so many private and expensive egos charging around in their own interests, you can never be sure of any common result; but even without concerted action you can hear a general and rising demand: give the movies back to the people who make them.

OTIS FERGUSON

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Washington Notes

No Cause for Cheers

THE ADMINISTRATION'S eighteen-vote victory on the question of lifting belligerent-zone restrictions on the movement of American ships was of a piece with its earlier one-vote victory on the question of extending the service period of draftees. It was triumph by so narrow a margin that it constituted moral defeat. To argue, as some have, that the isolationists took a stand on their last line of defense and that the way is now clear for an all-out effort to beat the Nazis is to take comfort from a far-fetched assumption. The vote gave the isolationists more encouragement than they had any right to expect and invited further obstruction.

What had been expected to develop into a rout turned out to be a fight between forces so evenly divided that the outcome was in doubt right up to the time the roll call started. Realizing that defeat would have had an extremely bad effect on the morale of the anti-Axis countries and would have forced modification of the President's foreign policy all along the line, administration leaders turned on every kind of heat to win over doubtful votes. They promised, cajoled and threatened. Their combined efforts finally turned the trick.

But the outcome demonstrated that as late as last week the President could not be certain of decisive congressional support when he added delivery service at the risk of shooting to the business of leasing and lending. And it provided further proof, if any were needed, that the extreme Southern reactionary wing of the Democratic Party is so undependable that it is worse than useless to the New Deal. Its treachery has embarrassed the President on innumerable occasions, but never before in quite such a fateful way.

Led by Representative Howard W. Smith of Virginia, who was taking his cue from Senator Harry Byrd, some thirty Representatives who previously had supported the administration's program of aid to Great Britain and Russia suddenly announced that they would vote with the isolationists in protest against defense strikes. To justify their desertion, they said they could not support further measures exposing the United States to war until the President had established control over defense labor. In other words, they were more anxious to beat down American labor than to beat the German army. Specious as their rationalization was, it was advanced in one speech after another and accounted for the votes that could have represented the difference between a solid and a narrow endorsement of administration policy.

A post-mortem on the roll call clearly shows that the Southern wrecking crew would have won had it succeeded in holding in line all the wobbly members to whom its argument appealed enough to justify their classification as doubtful on the eve of the voting. Hindsight also indicates that the Neutrality Act amendments would have been licked had the National Defense Mediation Board ruled for rather than against a union shop in the captive coal mines. The President's implied promise, backed up by considerably more specific promises from his congressional leaders, to submit some kind of labor legislation unquestionably was what saved the amendments.

Whether it intended to or not, the board sacrificed itself on the altar of administration foreign policy. It probably could have made out a good technical case for the union shop. But a finding in Lewis' favor would have outraged congressional sentiment even more than the President's forbearance. Lewis worked overtime for the isolationists and their come-lately Southern allies in his negotiations with the steel companies and the White House. His truculence made their position all the more plausible to the school of conservatives who always have looked upon the emergency as an excuse for putting labor back in its place. And this consequence of his attitude probably was not unforeseen by Lewis. As a by-product of his attempt to recapture leadership of the CIO, his contribution to the isolationist cause was pure velvet. He likes nothing better than to get in the way of the President's lease-lend policy. He boasts that his obstruction has kept the United States out of war.

Eventually, however, American labor will pay a stiff price for his gratuitous peace-making. As the result of Lewis' attempt to use the national emergency as a bludgeon for getting a union shop in the captive mines, the President probably will find it impossible to prevent enactment of repressive labor legislation. Instead of the Mediation Board, which successfully buffered public impatience with defense strikes, labor will get something far less reasonable. That a majority of organized workers and their leaders do not approve either Lewis' heavy-handed methods or his isolationism will be a fact that doesn't count for much when the pay-off comes. President Philip Murray of the CIO and his associates lost their opportunity to hedge the effect of Lewis' recalcitrance when they resigned from the board in protest against the captive-mine decision and thus completed the job of jerking out its foundations.

Regardless of the outcome of the captive-mine controversy, it has done two things which cannot be undone: it has slowed up help for Great Britain and Russia by feeding the anti-administration, anti-interventionist fires in Congress and it has seriously jeopardized the gains labor has been steadily winning ever since 1932.

The Southerners who walked out on the President when he most needed them may find that they have provoked another and far more menacing purge campaign than the one they went through in 1938. Anti-poll-tax forces are preparing to push legislation to outlaw financial restrictions on the franchise in Southern states. They have united the various organizations working for this legislation and established headquarters in Washington. In spite of the lukewarmness of some administration leaders, they apparently have White House support. Leaders of the movement recently conferred with Mrs. Roosevelt and she encouraged them to go ahead.

The House Judiciary Committee has reported a bill to impose the death penalty for industrial sabotage under the 1918 law, thus implementing the recommendation of Chairman Hatton W. Sumners that strikers in defense industries be sent to the electric chair.

Washington T. R. B.

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Bird Thou Never Wert

Blithe Spirit, by Noel Coward. Morosco Theatre, November 4, 1941.
Hamlet. National Theatre, November 11, 1941.

MR. NOEL COWARD'S LATEST PLAY has a delicious and bouncing idea. It is an idea capable either of farcicality or of complication in the directions of depth and meaning. As the play stands it wobbles between the two, though the farce elements survive best and afford an evening of genuine fun and chuckling—the last act somewhat excepted. That last act to "Blithe Spirit" drags and repeats, and throws away many of the farce chances even, not to mention the real implications that are present. The final moments, as the play is directed and presented here in New York, are fairly stupid, not to say banal. The evening as a whole is better than most, nevertheless, and diverting.

The story of "Blithe Spirit" is a gay one: the lady medium comes suddenly into unexpected powers and brings forth the ghost of the first wife. Later on, the second wife, as Lorelei would say, becomes killed; so that there are two ghosts on the man's hands and he plans, therefore, to "travel," as Charles II would say—why not be literary for a bit of sauce to a fluff, half-baked, of theatre evening?

Under Mr. John Wilson's hand the play is not in any real sense directed at all. Stage positions are settled, and apart from that practicality, the directing misses point after point and projection after projection. This is only another illustration of the hard fact that you are not a theatre craftsman merely because you fancy yourself in that position and the shine of it. A few rehearsals of "Blithe Spirit" at the hands of Mr. Coward or Mr. Alfred Lunt and the play would have been forwarded 40 or 50 percent, not only as performance but as bright, literate theatre writing.

Miss Peggy Wood as the second wife ladles out with ability whatsoever parts of her role can be ladled. Mr. Clifton Webb, capable of fine gradations in acting and witty technique, shows a lack in the freedom or impact that might have come from real directing. Miss Leonora Corbett, imported from her London experience in the part of the first wife, plays with style, humor and completeness. And Miss Mildred Natwick is brilliant and expansive as the medium, noting all the sarcasm of that personage's deep surprise at the depths that appear in the incident she promotes, and decking out the scenes with revelations and lights that are a good deal ahead of her playwright as he invents the situations. The sad fact is that Miss Natwick is in capacity for study, wits, beauty of mind and laborious, careful technique a reproach to nine-tenths of our stage.

The audience I saw watching Mr. Evans' "Macbeth" seemed to me genuinely absorbed, many of them finding the script of definite, and perhaps unaccustomed, interest and not disconnecting the performance from it. It made me think of the times the late Huey Long used to quote the Bible to New York interviewers and they found it so original and exciting. You can say on Mr. Evans' side—and more or less on Miss Margaret Webster's in her directing of the play—that there is no known way, quite, to do this play of Shakespeare's, no entirely secure or unified interpretation or handling, and, above all, tone. There is no discoverable and certain tone for the play, meaning by tone that governing soul and mood and flight that make all one, and supply the right gradation for each several part. If you want to keep the traditions, as found in the Furness Variorum Shakespeare and in stage memoirs, great actors, their egos and semi-lies, declining and glorious in a sunset light, that is one thing. If you want to be original and even violent, that is another, provided you remember always what Bacon said in this matter: "a froward retention of custom," he said, "is as turbulent a thing as an innovation."

I will say of this newest "Macbeth" that it is neither a tradition nor a genuine innovation; it is merely softish, and softish from the skin out. That very ugly scenery, badly executed in the outmoded daub-spotty style, and getting under everybody's feet, when all the while the architecture of the eleventh century is easily discovered, made a mess of the plot's dramatic needs. (The scenes for the witches were rather better, those claws and bats and shadows.) The men's mussy plus-four costumes were poor indeed, as well as puzzling; and Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene was executed in a costumer's outfit that suggested less sleep and fate than strolling in the castle park.

Shakespeare's play of "Macbeth" is based on ancient records, chronicles and ballads and mythologies; the way to treat it probably begins in the primitive, whatever we may decide that is, and works within primitive design and objectivity. On to the original story he grafted many elements, part history, part legend and balladry, plus the motifs of Norse mythology—the Norns, highly Scandinavian. It is descriptive of the play itself that the Norns are changed by Shakespeare in the way they are changed. These women are not witches in the vulgar sense, they were not there over smoking pots ready to reveal the future of events, frying frogs for kings, and so on. In essence they were men's destinies, not only seeing what that future would be but determining that future. But Shakespeare, knowing that a figure of fate, thus Grecian and final, would never count with his contemporary audience, turned the Norns into the gibberish and outline of the witchcraft familiar to every visitor in his theatre, and thus the tragedy mounts and spars, darkens and drives to despair such as approach it with the idea of renewing those first violent sweeps and intricacies, of managing those baroque lights, raw reds and those tragic, strong blacks, that follow throughout its composition, and the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red.

Mr. Evans has two physical limitations, however, that do not turn on choice or marginal decisions. One is a lack of vital force, a limitation for which the actor cannot be blamed. What we can blame him for is an unwise use of what force he has, a weak wasting and relaxed judgment in the emphases afforded. The other is a certain relaxed and non-vital failure in concentration that comes from a lack of vitality in focus or attention, so that speeches that are clear enough as Shakespeare come out complicated and pointless as Evans, spoutings perchance for blood and brains.

Miss Judith Anderson's Lady Macbeth had often good style and attack, though thwarted by the intrusive scenery, in the sleepwalking scene especially, and poorly laid out in the directing. In the directing an admirable plan appeared in the scene where Macduff learns of his wife and children's death. A serious failure mars the drama of the scene where

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Banquo is murdered and Fleance escapes. Shakespeare does nothing at the moment but indicates later that this escape is the climactic point of the whole play. As Miss Webster has the scene planned, the escape itself is scarcely noticed at all. The dramatic image is not set forth.

Nevertheless I think I enjoyed this "Macbeth" of Mr. Evans' more than many who admired it; there is something about his Shakespeare that he achieves and projects —perhaps it is the words. STARK YOUNG

The Bandwagon

In Vichy the French admiralty announced that 800,000 tons of French shipping had been seized and sunk by the British since the armistice, July, 1940. A government spokesman said this British policy is contrary to President Roosevelt's avowed object of maintaining freedom of the seas. – *Dispatch from London in The Detroit Times.*

A painful impression appears to have been created in Japanese circles when the Thai Ambassador and Thai students absented themselves yesterday from a concert organized . . . to launch a new theme song for the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," called "The Power of Asia."

It was to have been rendered in the Thai language by Thai university students. But they failed to appear. One explanation advanced was that, being young, the students might have been shy about singing before a large audience and that the Thai Ambassador overlooked the invitation. – *Wireless from Tokyo to The New York Times.*

Who Will Speak for Labor?

Labor Day at National Association of Manufacturers Congress.

Spokesmen of industry, the government and the American public will explore these key aspects of the present labor problem at the session of the Congress of American Industry which begins at 9:30 A.M. on Thursday, December 4. . . . Thomas Roy Jones, president of American Type Founders, will express industry's point of view. The Hon. Howard W. Smith . . . will discuss government's attitude. Congressman Smith is chairman of the Special Committee to investigate the Labor Relations Board and the Wagner Act. The third speaker, William Hard . . . will trace the course and temper of public opinion toward labor and the labor issue.

This Labor Day session takes on added significance in view of the apparent imminence of a new and more vigorous national labor policy—advocated by manufacturers for so long but as yet not forthcoming. – *From The NAM 46th Annual Convention News.*

No-Possible-Doubt-Whatever Department

Everyone [in Rumania] entitled to cast his vote was asked by the head of the polling station whether he was going to vote "Yes" or "No," whereupon he was handed the corresponding ticket, the broadcast said.

None of the results were known but the German news agency had no doubt about the outcome, saying:

"No one in Rumania doubts that the outcome of this plebiscite will be an overwhelming demonstration of confidence in Antonescu and his work." – *German Transocean broadcast, reported in The New York Times.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Negroes and the New Order

SIR: A reading of the press of today convinces me that there are many persons who do not realize that the struggle to destroy Hitler and Hitlerism is not a white man's battle alone. Such people, many of them Negroes, feel that the Negro, particularly the Southern Negro, faces such discrimination and suffers such injustices in our country that he would have very little, if anything, to lose by a Hitler victory. To such people permit me to suggest a reading of "Mein Kampf." There we find the German Führer revealed as the Machiavellian maniac that he is.

This book divulges a mind burning with a fanatic zeal to spread its beliefs with the sword throughout the world. In this Nazified world the Aryans shall rule as the superior race; other white peoples shall come under them, followed by the yellow races. The Negro—well, he is just "half ape." His art is worthless; his eminent artists, scholars, professional men, etc., are not educated in the same sense as are members of other races; they are only "trained," *e. g.*, as one would train a poodle. He should not be permitted to become a citizen, but should, with the Jew, forever be a subject. He has nothing to contribute to civilization, and wherever his blood is found, there automatically is deterioration. It does not take a Doctor of Philosophy to see where such a race would fit into Hitler's New Order. The backwoods of Talmadge's Georgia would be a heaven in comparison. Hitler's sincerity and religious fanaticism make this prognosis all the more terrible to contemplate.

Persons who can read these ideas and still feel that the Negro has no stake in this conflict are blinding their minds to the facts. The Negro's fate is inextricably interwoven with that of democracy, for only through this medium can there be any hope of achieving a world in which all men will be considered equal.
Samuel Huston College, Austin, Tex. J. T. SMALLWOOD

Viereck, "Anti-Anti-Semite"

SIR: The arrest of George Sylvester Viereck, poet, propagandist and pamphleteer, touched off a rich outpouring of editorial comment but nowhere have I seen mention made of this gentleman's curious attitude toward Jews. In April, 1940, Mr. Viereck wrote in a letter to The Jewish Voice, Los Angeles, that he has "never prepared or assisted in the preparation of anti-Semitic material in this country or anywhere else in the world. . . . I have never concealed my admiration for the constructive achievements of National Socialism and the dynamic genius of Adolf Hitler, but I have stated with equal clearness my refusal to accept the anti-Semitic doctrine of National Socialism." One explanation for this heresy may lie in Viereck's debt to Jews for his early success as a poetaster. Ludwig Lewisohn, in a preface to Viereck's "Gedichte" (1904), observed: "The only German influence that came to Viereck was that of Heine. . . . Within his own limits Viereck is a true poet. He has originality, he has power, he has imagination, and his extreme youth gives his talents large possibilities of development."

Another possible reason for Viereck's anti-anti-Semitism may be found in an article Viereck wrote in Today's Challenge, published by his dummy organization—which has apparently ceased to function—in 1939. He berates Britain for "breaking her pledge" to develop in Palestine a Jewish National Homeland. He bemoans the fact that the Jews are persecuted in many countries aside from Germany. He proposes that the "Jewish

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problem" be resolved around an international conference table, etc., etc.

Why such solicitude for the Jews on the part of the arch-spokesman for Nazism? Viereck's assignment was to sell the Reich to literate Americans. The Reich's treatment of Jews in no wise helped matters so far as Viereck was concerned. Ergo, the Viereck line: National Socialism is O.K. except for a slight aberration with regard to the Jews. . . . You can be a good Nazi and a good anti-anti-Semite at the same time.

Even as the lunatic fringe is represented by such individuals as McWilliams, Sanctuary, Pelley, Winrod, so do we have the holier-than-thou crowd personified by Winrod, Coughlin and Curran; the flag-wavers represented by Flynn, Lindbergh and Reynolds; the congressional hate front represented by Holman, Thorkelson, Wheeler and Nye. Viereck might be classified in a special category (to which I would also consign Lawrence Dennis, Albert Jay Nock, *et. al*): the fascist Lorelei.

ARTHUR SETTEL, Managing Editor,
New York City The American Hebrew

The American Navy

SIR: I was very much interested in Mr. Hale's article on the Pacific in your September 29 issue, and agreeing as I do with his general conclusions, it seemed to me rather too bad that he should have based them in a couple of cases on erroneous premises. For example, at the close of his article he is describing what is known as a "striking force" as though it were something sensationally new and just emerging from the experimental stage.

This is not true at all. The striking-force doctrine has been an integral part of American naval strategy at least since 1935 and the striking force has been used in maneuvers since that date. A reference to it can be found in Hanson Baldwin's book "The Caissons Roll," published, I believe, in 1938, and I myself discussed the matter at some length in "Sea Power and Today's War" (1939).

Also he implies that our cruisers now in the Atlantic would be unable to stand up to a ship of the Admiral Scheer type. I think this would require a good deal of demonstration in view of what happened when a ship of exactly this type encountered British vessels much more weakly armed and much less well protected than the cruisers we now have on Atlantic patrol.

I also find a certain amount of error in Mr. Hale's ideas about battleships. He "cannot discern what purpose ships of the old New York class serve in the North Atlantic." The New York class ships were brought to the Atlantic as early as 1936, and for the reason that they were not fit to lie in the line with the faster and better protected vessels of the battle force. The alternative to using them in the Atlantic is not sending them back to the Pacific but to the scrapheap; and they make rather good convoy protection against surface raiders.

New York City FLETCHER PRATT

SIR: Mr. Pratt is quite right in correcting any impression I may have given that the United States Navy's striking-force idea is something sensational and new. I wrote, however, that as of 1941 these swift cruiser and aircraft-carrier detachments are already obsolete, since the Japanese have now put into service some battleships able to match their speeds.

Mr. Pratt cites the success of three British cruisers against the Admiral Graf Spee in disproof of my statement that our Atlantic cruisers could not stand up to a ship of that class. I said, however, that they could not stand up to her singly. I doubt that Mr. Pratt would order our eight-inch Quincy to slug it out unhelped with the eleven-inch Admiral Scheer.

I stick to my doubt as to the usefulness of thirty-year-old battleships like the New York against U-boats. Mr. Pratt is well aware that the three ships in question were designed not long after the start of the dreadnought era and that they lack anything like up-to-date underwater protection. I shouldn't want to see them put back into the Pacific; Mr. Pratt takes the words out of my mouth when he suggests that the alternate place for them would be the scrapheap.

The annals of the World War are full of easy sinkings of aged, floundering ships whose presence had been more of a liability to their admiralties than an asset: I remind Mr. Pratt of the German Pommern, the French Bouvet and the British Cressy, Hogue and Aboukir—all of them futile deathtraps that carried almost their whole crews to the bottom.

New York City WILLIAM HARLAN HALE

Consider the Nature of Man

SIR: Apropos of Jean Danforth's letter about army morale (The New Republic, November 3), I am glad to find even one realistic thinker and congratulate you upon your willingness to print opinions so shocking. I can only add the suggestion that the common soldier be given still more inducements within his range of comprehension and appreciation, such as more buttons and stripes. A very casual reading of history shows morale through the ages supported by promises of such benefits as loot and women for each individual as well as for those who stood as always to gain hugely from the war game. I notice you placed under Bandwagon the notice that ice-cream cars to the army are given precedence over tanks and guns, as if this were a joke. Pepsi-Cola and chocolate-covered mounds ought to go through express too!

The fact that women will be more and more inaccessible to the common soldier is advertised so widely now that no one could have any doubt about the intolerable state of famine that faces a million men at the most urgent age. Who could blame the men for grumbling and who with any common sense could expect to solve the problem with pep talks?

I wish to second and amplify thus your correspondent's suggestion to consider the nature of your common man and his drives when casting about for means to raise his morale.

New Haven, Conn. MILDRED H. CLARK, M.D.

Harry Bridges and Democracy

SIR: I was interested in your editorial about Harry Bridges in the October 6 issue of The New Republic, but I am afraid that I must disagree with the impression you apparently wish to leave in the minds of your readers.

I do not suppose that anyone will deny that the law proposed in Congress for the purpose of banning Harry Bridges was an incredibly bad law or that the law which subsequently was passed and under which Bridges was tried for the second time may be an instrument of oppression in the hands of unscrupulous men.

But, for all that can be said in favor of Bridges—and it is a good deal—there is one enormously damning fact. It shouldn't be necessary to try to convince anyone who has followed his career over the past seven years and who has followed in any detail his two trials that, whether Bridges is a member of the Communist Party or not, he is distinctly not in favor of any kind of democratic socialism or of any kind of democratic political control in labor unions or anywhere else.

I do not suppose there is anyone outside the Communist Party and a few groups of its more active sympathizers who does not feel that this country would be better off without men who think as Harry Bridges does on political questions, that is, without men who follow the Communist Party line whether they are actually Communists or not. For while it is true that one is

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sometimes embarrassed by one's friends and should not be held to account because of it, it is not true that Harry Bridges has ever, publicly at least, been embarrassed by his Communist friends.

Freedom of speech and freedom of action must be permitted of course in a democracy, and logically there is no place to call a halt on men like Bridges who abuse democracy or on political groups that egg him on. But how much freedom of speech and freedom of action can democracy stand? I honestly don't know. But I do know that if a thoroughly healthy democracy existed in this country neither Bridges nor his Communist friends would have a tenth of the power they have now. And the shipowners of the Pacific Coast would not possess a tenth of the power which they now have.

Democracy is helpless before the attacks of men who believe as Bridges does, just as it is helpless before the attacks of men who believe as his enemies do. But the methods of Bridges and the methods of Communism have a very strong similarity to the methods of the men who chiefly oppose them. And between the Communists on the one side and the shipowner fascists on the other, honest or dishonest in their intentions as these two groups may be, the ordinary American is crushed.

Ventura, Calif. LOUISE DAVIES

Mr. Biddle on Art

SIR: If you received a communication from some old geezer of the Harding-Coolidge-Hoover era to the effect that all this New Deal Stuff—all this progressive, liberal, democracy stuff is just the bunk and won't last, or, if you heard from Mr. Royal Cortissoz to the effect that all this Post-Impressionist, Fauve, Cubist, "Modernistic art" is just nonsense and but a passing whimsy, soon to be forgotten, would you print it under that most dignified caption of yours—"A Communication"?

The gist of Artist Biddle's letter [October 27] is that Artist Biddle does not care for "surrealist" art. Who cares about that? Mr. Cortissoz does not care for "modernistic" art—but who cares?

"Modernistic" art and "surrealist" art are of the very core of life and we have always had both with us from the art of the cave man, through medieval art to Renaissance art down to the present day. Artist Biddle should go back and study his old masters all the way.

Also, our "Corliss Lamont of the art world" Biddle should study semantics a bit and tell us what he means by "life."

Woodstock, N. Y. GEORGE C. AULT

What Hungary Wants

SIR: The Hungarian Peace Treaty was certainly unwise in attaching purely Magyar areas to other Succession States of the late Hapsburg empire. However, the assiduous propaganda carried on by the Hungarian ruling caste during the last twenty years was aimed, as recent events have shown, not at the improvement of the treaty, but at the annihilation of the neighboring states. This propaganda made many Americans of Hungarian descent "revisionists" with more or less pro-Nazi sympathies. Others became, by reaction to this propaganda, Communists, and again, another group, being aware of the impossibility of drawing a clear-cut line between the nationalities of the Danube Basin, is anxious to democratize Hungary and to make her a member of a peaceful Danubian federation. One organization, the American Federation of Democratic Hungarians, under the leadership of Professor R. Vambery, stands for this program. Another movement, led by Dr. de Eckhardt, who recently came to this country, has the support of the "revisionist" Hungarian-American Federation. Although this movement, too, is supposed to be anti-Nazi, its supporters refuse to profess such an attitude because Hitler, by returning part of the pre-war territory "peacefully," revised the treaty.

What the people of Hungary want is easy to guess, although, in the absence of civil liberties, there are no means of expressing public opinion, and the parliament is but a window dressing to mislead Western political amateurs. As a Magyar proverb has it: Not even a mother understands the speech of a mute child. If the victors will attempt to be a mother to the destitute Magyar people they might easily surmise what the speechless child needs. It needs a higher standard of living; the farm hands need a higher wage than 20 cents per day; they need a thorough land reform and they want to live in peace with their neighbors because this is the only alternative to being swallowed by the German or Slav ocean. What this people apparently does not want is the continuation or restoration of that feudal rule under which it has languished for centuries and which is responsible for Hungary's looting by the Nazi marauders.

LADISLAS FENYES,
New York City Former Member of the Pre-War Parliament

Wanted: A Steady Job

SIR: I would appreciate it very much if you could tell me the occupations which will or may have the best chances during the depression which may come.

New York City J. K.

[If any of our readers have suggestions to make we shall be glad to forward their advice to J. K. – THE EDITORS]

From The New Republic Mail Bag

The bulk of the week's fan mail continues to applaud Jesse Rainsford Sprague for his article "Slaughter, Sponsored by—" (The New Republic, October 6). Charles Kroll, Harwichport, Massachusetts, tells us that he and his family are boycotting the products of any company "that employs overzealous methods in advertising." Percy H. Arden, Chicago, suggests that radios be put on a meter basis "and let us pay for what we want to hear." George Lang of the University of Alabama tells us he has not listened to his radio for weeks, but "I now wait for my newspaper and The New Republic and have the satisfaction of knowing that I have not been insulted." And dozens of other readers join in endorsing Mr. Sprague's article.

Charles H. Bennett of New Haven heartily agrees with Victor Yarros' letter (The New Republic, November 3) on the subject of symphony programs. "What a tremendous improvement in the morale of all the major orchestras as well as their listeners could be effected," he says, "by a complete ban, for one season, on the music of Beethoven, Brahms, Wagner and Tschaikowsky."

Robert M. MacGregor writes from Mexico City that A. A. Preciado's letter (The New Republic, October 13) paints too rosy a picture of the Mexican political situation. In proof of this he cites some examples: "Out of nine daily papers in Mexico City only two seem willing to condemn Hitler; the vast majority of the middle class, largely made up of Spaniards, were pro-Franco and are today pro-Hitler; a large cross-section of the population blame the world's troubles on the Jews and repeat the old canard that Roosevelt is a Jew; Acción Nacional, the Gold Shirts, are reorganizing, as are the Sinarquistas, a fascist organization which has just 'won from the President of Mexico the right to colonize Lower California.'"

The United States Civil Service Commission announces an examination to fill the position of Librarian (Technical Processes) in the Department of Agriculture and positions of a similar nature in other agencies. Applications must be filed at the Commission's Washington office not later than December 4.

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Books in Review

Mr. Brooks Dissenting

VAN WYCK BROOKS's new book[1] starts out as one of those curiously oblique New England autobiographies in which the author pretends to have only a nodding acquaintance with the author. Henry Adams wrote his memoirs in the third person, but for Brooks even this seems too familiar; he speaks of himself as "my friend Oliver Allston, who died last year in his early fifties." That Allston is Brooks, we are left in no doubt, for many of the quotations from Allston's journals are taken from Brooks's occasional writings (including his fine speech before the League of American Writers), and their two lives coincide except at the end. Brooks at fifty-six has many years of activity before him; but in writing of himself as someone dead he may be announcing—as many writers have done symbolically—that his old self is buried; that a new self is about to be born.

In any case, the pretense of being someone else is designed to circumvent the writer more than the reader—that is, to outwit the diffident and scrupulous New England spirit in him (for he *is* a New Englander, in spite of having spent most of his life in the New York suburbs) which believes that an author's personality is of no concern to his audience. And the ruse has been successful, to the point of producing a mellow and candid book in which Brooks has said as much about his literary career as any self-respecting man is entitled to say, and not a word more. As for his private life, it so remains.

Brooks-Allston was not only "a predestined writer" but was also predestined to writing criticism. "When I was fourteen," he says, "my greatest man was Ruskin, and although I wrote two stories in college and the usual number of bad poems, I meant to be a critical writer and have had no other ambition since. So the saying that a critic is one who has failed at something else has no meaning for me." Indeed, he tends to place his own branch of his own profession above all others. Writers, he thinks, should "rule by writing, as they do rule, even at the present; for 'imagination governs mankind,' as a practical man, Napoleon, said—and who rules the imagination more than writers?" The critics govern other writers in a fashion, and therefore "it is important that criticism should itself be wise."

But before he makes this statement and enlarges on its implications, Brooks has other things to discuss. He talks entertainingly about his habits of work and modestly about his character, with its passion for clarity and its hatred of abstract thinking. He talks about poverty as an ideal for writers, and politics as a dangerous distraction, and living abroad as a peril to people who are insecurely rooted in their own soil. He offers maxims for reviewers, one of which cannot be quoted too often:

> In criticism, no faint praise. Take from the author everything that is not his by right, take it as a surgeon takes away every last cell of morbid tissue, with a strict and relentless knife; then cauterize the wound and help the victim to his feet again and send him away with both hands filled with flowers.

He deplores the habit that most reviewers have of living entirely within the present—to such an extent "that they have not even seen the present, and, having no sense of the past, they have no sense of the future." For himself, all the great writers are contemporaries; and he quotes by preference—and sometimes to excess—from Boswell, Emerson, Thoreau, Goethe, Leopardi, rather than from the latest arguments about Art and the Crisis (although this is the subject he is really discussing). He says, moreover, that he writes criticism "as Plutarch wrote his Lives . . . to repel from his own spirit the worthless, evil or ignoble feelings aroused by the enforced associations of everyday life." Has anyone remarked that his two longest books are, in effect, Plutarch's lives of the New England worthies?

But it is only when he talks about the function of critical and creative writing today that he ceases to be mellow and tolerant; that he writes with the passionate desire for change that distinguished his early essays. Perhaps the kindly historian is what he is burying with Oliver Allston; perhaps the angry moralist is being reborn. Once more, after a lapse of twenty years, he is castigating American writers for their sins, but the sins are no longer the same. As a heretical critic, he used to condemn the orthodox American novels; now it is the novels that are heretical. The critic proclaims that literature "has been out on a branch. We must return to the trunk."

The branch he refers to is really three branches, and he spends some time describing each of them. The first is the fierce naturalism that began by exposing the abuse of high ideals, but ended by attacking the ideals along with the abuses; this is the tendency represented by Dos Passos and Hemingway. The second is the symbolist tendency represented by Joyce and Eliot, with its emphasis on personal visions and elaborate techniques. The third is the critical writing of Eliot's disciples in this country, and especially of the Southern school, which, he believes, totally disregards human values. Together these tendencies threaten to dominate American letters.

There have been a few writers, it is true, "for whom life was noble and important"; he mentions Frost, Brooks and Lewis Mumford. But there have been more—many more, writing with what seems to be a deeper conviction—who have seen life as petty and mean and who have completely neglected the great primary themes of courage, justice, honor, love and mercy. These writers, he says, represent the death-drive instead of the life-drive; "and if, with their technical virtues, they destroy our faith, our will to make the world worth living in, we cannot let their influence go unchallenged." Nor does Brooks fail to challenge

[1] Opinions of Oliver Allston, by Van Wyck Brooks. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 309 pages. $3.

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it. In one of the bitterest passages he has ever written, he excoriates

> . . . these one-eyed writers, sickly adolescents, self-centered and neurotic, inexperienced persons, divorced from the soil, divorced from their country, often, and from parenthood and love, ignorant of the general life, with no horizon beyond their noses or the spiritual slums in which they live. They are besotted egoists, one and all, stewing in their vanity, throwing dust in the eyes of their readers, mystagogues and swindlers.

This is the case that Brooks makes out against most of our serious writers, thundering in the voice of a prosecuting attorney. He scarcely mentions the war, but it is always in his mind; and he believes that so far as these writers have been leading the public in the crisis, they have been leading it astray, toward cynicism and surrender. Just how much truth is there in his charges, and how much virtue in his remedies? These are questions to which I hope to return next week.

MALCOLM COWLEY

Two Dark Ages

The Cambridge Economic History of Europe from the Decline of the Roman Empire. Volume I: The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages. Edited by J. H. Clapham and the late Eileen Power. Cambridge University Press. New York: The Macmillan Company. 650 pages. $7.50.

IT HAS BECOME a tradition that the amateur detective must have a strong interest in esoteric learning. Sometimes indeed he turns with reluctance from Egyptology and Chinese ceramics to the vulgar business of solving crime. Is it because scholarship, too, feeds the passion for detection? Is it because some of its large issues may be untangled by juxtaposing small clues? Surely, when the witness of the written record proves inadequate or has disappeared altogether, the answer to a historical question may become a gossamer of infinitesimal hints.

The mystery that was medieval agrarianism has had to be reconstructed in the first volume of the Cambridge Economic History with the aid of archeology, philology, cemetery lore, air photography and comparative anthropology. The study of place names has helped to determine whether settlements were originally Roman or German, aristocratic or communal in character. The old graveyards have yielded valuable indications: it makes quite a difference whether the modest graves lie alone or converge respectfully around the splendid burial of a nobleman. The rats are well worth watching: the absence of their holes from Romano-British homes shows that there wasn't much food left after the landlord and tax-gatherer had swept by. However, the peasants could hardly have been starving, since their bones show no sign of rickets. The study of harnessing has solved the question of why the slower oxen were preferred to horses for pulling the ancient plow. It seems that the old soft collar pressed on the jugular vein and interfered with their breathing, while the stiff collar, which rested on the shoulder, was introduced only after the fall of Rome.

Of such stuff is this scholarly mosaic. Combining, or rather mixing, regional and topical treatments, the study deals with technical problems of crops, cattle-raising and implements, as well as with the layout of fields and villages, peasant toil and the social superstructure that rested upon it. The general reader will be interested particularly in Richard Koebner's account of "The Settlement and Colonization of Europe," Marc Bloch's summary of "The Rise of Dependent Cultivation" and Hans Nabholz's concluding essay on "Medieval Society in Transition." As might be expected, some old views are confirmed, others are modified. There is common agreement on the nature of the manor, despite myriad local variations. Alfons Dopsch is still insisting that the German invaders did not break up the continuity of Roman life and culture, but his critics, looking at the same material, are holding to the apparently more substantial view that they did. The polite brush in the footnotes hardly betrays the heat and significance of the issue at stake. Evidence is accumulating that the Germans were not actually in need of *Lebensraum*. They did not always sufficiently exploit the land they had and shied at clearing forests; hence they were constantly moving about. "They were always thinking that someone else had land that they wanted."

The great story is all here: how slavery went down with the more articulated economy of Rome, how serfdom spread and the "powerful" sat down on the necks of the "dirty" and the "stinkards," how agricultural techniques and yields declined and communications were cut, and, finally, how the exchange economy, rising prices and labor shortages, among other factors, pulled Europe out of the mire and onto the road of agrarian progress. The tragedy of this advance lay in the transformation of personal into "real" serfdom. Obligations and services previously attached to people were now attached to the land which they cultivated, and frequently only the *reason* why they fulfilled them was changed. The French Revolutionists were not so far wrong when they lumped modern and medieval burdens together as "feudalism." A new serfdom replaced the old and one of its names was ground-rent.

"The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages" shares the classic virtues and faults of most Cambridge compendia, now some eleven in number and still growing. It is, of course, a rich storehouse of facts. But while some of the authors present the facts in suggestive syntheses, others are content with an aridly nominalistic approach: nothing seems more important than anything else. The execution and style are uneven, and a unifying principle is lacking. It is too bad that J. H. Clapham did not carry out his intention to make some editorial generalizations from the material. Due to the rise of fascism and the extension of the war, the volume was assembled with difficulty, and shows it. When Koebner began to write his magisterial essay he was a professor in Breslau; he soon had to "transfer" to Jerusalem and forthwith learn to lecture in Hebrew. An Italian contributor was "unable to deliver" his manuscript. He was replaced by a Dane and then by a Finn, Gunnar Mickwith of the University of Helsinki, who "with great determination, finished the section before he had occasion to write from 'somewhere in Finland' in November, 1939, that he hoped to get back to economic history but that 'it was a small thing compared with the independence of his country.' " We learn that his name was later on the casualty list of the Russo-Finnish war. The Spanish contributor "sadly threw up his task because he was a refugee in Santander and his notes were in Seville"; the editor has not

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heard from him since. "Of Professor [Jan] Rutkowski," writes Mr. Clapham, "all we know with certainty is that he cannot be at his University of Poznan; we believe that Professor [François Louis] Ganshof, an officer of the reserve, is alive in Belgium; and that Professor Marc Bloch [of the Sorbonne], after serving with the armies, is safe in America." The outlook for the continuance of this new series is dark, and we might say that this volume tells a tale of contemporary as well as medieval life—both with a medieval touch.

SOLOMON F. BLOOM

Full-Length Portrait

A Curtain of Green, by Eudora Welty, with an introduction by Katherine Anne Porter. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 285 pages. $2.50.
House of Fury, by Felice Swados. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 263 pages. $2.
Strangers Are Coming, by I. A. R. Wylie. New York: Random House. 312 pages. $2.50.
Saratoga Trunk, by Edna Ferber. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 352 pages. $2.50.

IN HER INTRODUCTION to Eudora Welty's collection of short stories, Katherine Anne Porter has said a number of profoundly true and sensitive things. She has said them of Miss Welty, whom she describes as "a quiet, tranquil-looking, modest girl" who was brought to visit her one hot midsummer evening in Louisiana; and she says them of Miss Welty as a writer with a writer's responsibility and problem to consider; and, lastly, she says them of the actual writing Miss Welty has done. I speak of these remarks of Miss Porter's here because they seem to me to offer as good a set of standards to bring to the evaluation of writers and writing as any I have seen.

Miss Porter tells us that Miss Welty spends "an immense amount of time" writing, although the fact that she does write is either not known or, if known, dismissed as of little importance in the Mississippi town where Miss Welty has spent the relatively few years of her life. We learn that she listens to music, cultivates flowers and leads the "normal social life" which exists in any medium-sized town; we learn, too, that she was never in any hurry either to be published or acclaimed, and that she possessed that happy and "instinctive knowledge that writing cannot be taught, but only learned, and learned by the individual in his own way, at his own pace, and in his own time." To complete this gravely and brilliantly executed portrait, Miss Porter adds that Miss Welty has been spared a "militant social consciousness," which Miss Porter believes can only serve to narrow, not to widen, the creative artist's way. When the artist "disassociates himself from the human world in favor of a set of political, which is to say, inhuman rules," Miss Porter writes, "he cuts himself away from his proper society—living men."

Here then is Miss Welty's equipment, and it is a singularly uncorrupt equipment in much the same way that Emily Dickinson's was. Add to it what Miss Porter defines as "an active and disciplined imagination," and we are, in "A Curtain of Green," brought face to face with one of the most gifted and interesting short-story writers of our time. The parallel between Emily Dickinson and Eudora Welty need not, I feel, be dropped here. They are both American women writers of exceptional distinction who, each in her own century and in her own conditions, instinctively mistrusted the outer paraphernalia of literary contacts and activity and who, each in her own way, sought and found in silence an inner and almost mystical tongue. That Eudora Welty has just won a prize for her story, "A Worn Path," in the O. Henry Memorial Collection is interesting to note, but it is of little importance. She is working out something for herself which none of us can have any part in, and whatever honors come must be simply by the way. In the same sense, what small pieces of criticism one might write down are of little importance, for Eudora Welty has probably recognized the weaknesses already and is proceeding beyond them. The first one is her tendency to carry objectivity so far that at times her characters are seen from such a distance and at such an angle that they lose all human proportions, and the approach of the author herself deteriorates into something as unworthy as the spectator's point of view. This manifests itself notably in the first three stories in the book, and I deplore that they should have been placed where they are. I should like to have seen the collection start off with "Keela, the Outcast Indian Maiden," "Powerhouse" and the "Hitch-Hikers," printed with equal importance and somehow side by side.

It is characteristic of Miss Porter's own active and disciplined mind that she does not let matters rest here but enters boldly and admirably into the question of the compunction which Miss Welty or any other short-story writer should feel about writing a novel—the publisher's trap, Miss Porter calls it, which he lays for every short-story writer of any gifts at all. "She can very well become a master of the short story," Miss Porter writes. "It is quite possible that she can never write a novel, and there is no reason why she should." In considering this statement I have attempted to project Miss Welty's "case against realism" into a vehicle which would demand more continuity of thought and more development of act. Although I feel that her short stories are (and here is my second critical note) not unlike paintings in that they are absolutely halted as they stand, I foresee no way of failure for her written or unwritten novel. On the contrary, I feel that Eudora Welty could "at her own pace, and in her own time" do whatever she set out to do.

It is regrettable that as much cannot be said of Felice Swados, for she had in "House of Fury," the story of a girls' penal institution, a tremendous thing to tell. The title is in itself impressive, and the first four pages, which give us the letters of a girl of thirteen to her father who has raped her, and his letters to her in answer, promise a strong and moving presentation of the material. In addition to these four pages, Miss Swados' earnestness and the fact that she has written the book as if from within the walls and completely without venom or motive should be signaled, but that is all. Apart from this, awkwardness, even diffidence, mar the characterizations, and although many of the scenes are as violent and depraved as any Faulkner has dealt with, they stir the reader about as much as would the description of a taffy-pull at a young ladies' seminary. Miss Swados' recording of them—and of all the other scenes—is bloodless, ineffectual and dull.

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I. A. R. Wylie's "Strangers Are Coming" and Edna Ferber's "Saratoga Trunk," however, are both far less worthy of attention than Miss Swados' "House of Fury," and they will undoubtedly get more. Felice Swados has at least tried to write a book and, within her own limitations, she has written one. Miss Ferber and Miss Wylie are doing what they can to animate history in a shallow, witty, very able way. Miss Ferber deals with "the greatest railroader America has ever known," and Miss Wylie, according to her jacket-blurb, is making a "stirring case for the war sufferers in our midst." There is not a single lovable character between Miss Ferber's covers, which is something; Miss Wylie has at least three whom I wouldn't mind doing away with with my own bare hands. But lovable or not, you'll doubtless see them all on the screen within the coming year.

KAY BOYLE

The Devil's Disciple

I Paid Hitler, by Fritz Thyssen, New York: Farrar and Rinehart. 310 pages. $2.75.

IN A FOREWORD the publisher claims that "this extraordinary book has an extraordinary story" which "must be told." The actual contents of the book do not substantiate either claim. Further, it would have been better for the democratic cause if the major part of the story had been given painstaking editing and annotations comparable to those in Reynal and Hitchcock's edition of "Mein Kampf."

The first half of these memoirs is devoted to explaining Fritz Thyssen's role in Hitler's rise to power and the reasons which induced him to leave the Reich in August, 1939. This part of the story is familiar. Thyssen's support of the Nazi Party has been described in detail and far more objectively before, especially in the writings of Konrad Heiden. The version given in the memoirs is full of contradictions, and in no way rehabilitates the man without whose support the Nazi Party might never have risen to power. Thyssen describes his long association with the Nazis merely as "a political error," and the only adequate reproof he can utter against this criminal association is to say "What a dumbbell I have been!" *("Ein Dummkopf war Ich!")*

In explanation of the real motive which impelled Thyssen to leave the Reich the memoirs offer little beyond a reproduction of the letters he addressed to Nazi leaders and which were made public as far back as the spring of 1940. In those letters Thyssen had made it clear beyond doubt that his main reason for breaking with the Nazis was Hitler's pact with Stalin. He objected to the war because it would "make Germany dependent on Russia for raw materials," and he appealed to Goering and the Führer "to stop pursuing a policy which, if successful, will cast Germany into the arms of communism; and, if unsuccessful, will mean the end of Germany." Though denouncing Hitler bitterly for having "compounded with communism," Thyssen nevertheless felt impelled to confess that it was "impossible" for him "to renounce the real ideals and the original doctrine of National Socialism. . . ." Thyssen's partial reconciliation with the Nazis, reported in a Berlin dispatch to The New York Times of October 17, 1941, comes, therefore, as no surprise.

Thyssen's views on the Nazi economy and war machine, which make up the rest of the book, have a dangerously familiar ring. They are the views which lulled the democracies to sleep while Hitler was forging his formidable army. Thyssen merely repeats them without adding anything new. The Nazi financial system is described as if it were nothing more than a mechanism for lining the pockets of party notables. The Second Four Year Plan, which made the Reich largely self-sufficient in certain raw materials essential to war, is dismissed as a complete failure. The reader is given to believe that the strategic highways which Fritz Todt built to add to the mobility and transportation facilities of the German army were constructed merely to permit the Nazi bigwigs to race their high-powered automobiles. According to Thyssen, "war, in the last analysis, came because nobody [in Germany] knew what to do next."

Thyssen's predictions are as worthless as his views on the Nazi economy. The penultimate chapter, written before the Flanders campaign, "reveals" Germany's weakness: "Germany was not prepared for war"; she had no gasoline and oil stocks; the quality of her armaments and pilots was low; her artillery was "definitely bad"; and Hitler was "certainly no longer sure" of his generals. The publisher caps this worthless and dangerously misleading testimony by telling the reader that Thyssen's "statements are to be trusted in so far as the quality of German armaments is concerned" and that his "facts seem to corroborate the theory that so far Hitler's war in western Europe has been decided, not by the strength of arms but much rather by the unscrupulous pioneer work of fifth columnists and the treason committed by their allies in Belgium, Holland and France."

THOMAS REVEILLE

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A Reader's List

AMERICA'S LAST KING: An Interpretation of the Madness of George III, by Manfred S. Guttmacher (Scribner's, $3.50). A psychiatrist's sympathetic, well informed, entertaining biography of George III, who was seized on five separate occasions by "manic-depressive insanity"—ascribed principally to frustration. The king is represented as a man of real ability, a conscientious ruler, with incredible knowledge of governmental details, who took kingship too seriously and whose faults were exaggerated virtues. Illustrated.

MY INDIA, MY AMERICA, by Krishnalal Shridharani (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, $3.75). This is an Indian "My Country and My People," written by a Hindu for the American public. Never profound, but often entertaining, it tells of Indian food, religion, art, politics and Yogis. Recommended to the many readers who like Lin Yutang.

THAT DAY ALONE, Pierre Van Paassen (Dial, $3.75). When Van Paassen covers a war he uses a copy pencil and a crystal ball. The result is one part anecdote and one part Delphic oracle. This is a collection of odds and ends about Europe from the fall of France to the Hess affair. Meaningful little scenes—a barroom conversation, boyhood friends fighting on opposite sides at the Russo-Japanese front, an incident in a Paris bookshop—but with no particular reason for putting them in the same book. Van Paassen was in Europe when history exploded, and by the time he reaches his last chapter he is hearing voices and seeing visions.

MUNICH PLAYGROUND, by Ernest R. Pope (G. P. Putnam, $2.75). When Hitler plays hookey from the Chancellory, he heads for Munich. In Berlin Der Führer is all business. In Munich he is a spoiled little boy playing with his toys. The author was Munich correspondent for Reuter's from 1936 until the war began.

GOVERNMENT AND THE NEEDY, by Paul Tutt Stafford (Princeton, $3). Drawing upon the experience of New Jersey with public assistance for dependent persons, the author argues in favor of a single, statewide public-welfare program, administered by large local units acting under close supervision from the state capitol, and against the poor-law notions which the pre-industrial age wrote into the legal system of most states.

INDIAN-FIGHTING ARMY, by Fairfax Downey (Scribner's, $3.50). Lively, informal history of the Indian wars from 1865 to 1890, with emphasis on the courage of the tough United States regulars who put down the countless uprisings. The famous campaigns and battles are described with punch and intelligence. Downey is somewhat too sentimental about the army, but he states the Indians' case with complete fairness. More proof that the United States seal on an Indian treaty was worth about as much as a Hitler promise. Illustrated.

VERMONT IS WHERE YOU FIND IT, arranged by Keith Warren Jennison (Harcourt, Brace, $2.50). These fifty-eight full-page pictures taken in Vermont get closer to the character of the state and its people than all the stuff that's been written about them. Nothing spectacular or tricky, just excellent photography inspired by good sense. Accompanied by homely, amusing commentary for those who are amused easily.

STILL ALIVE WITH LUCAS, by Helen Riehm (McBride, $2.50). Two refugees from Germany caught in the Spanish civil war; the husband joins the International Brigade, the wife runs a shelter for destitute children. A gallant, imperturbable account, its spirits not even frayed by the nightmare flight that finally landed the couple safe in France.

FIRST PAPERS, by Martin Gumpert (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, $2.75). The book is anything but what its title indicates. Dr. Gumpert is a German writer of philosophical novels who has come to America and applied for citizenship. Thomas Mann, in the introduction, says that the book is the story of how an American citizen is made. It is also a philosophical novel.

DESTINY HAS BRIGHT EYES, by Willard A. Hanna (Harpers, $2.50). How Japan's invasion of a Chinese university city raises hell with five people: a White Russian engineer and his American wife, a German-Jewish refugee, a wealthy Chinese intellectual, and the American professor who tells the story. Action begins on a note of somewhat perfunctory jealousy and rises to one of horror. A sober, effective novel, the style notable for its composure.

RADIO CITY, by Hartzell Spence (Dial, $2.50). A novel about radio advertising and the people in it, with the streamlined Rockefeller layout as background. Specifically, a sincere advertising chap outsmarts the interlocking combinations of executive heels who dominate this high-tension racket and wins his fight to establish an honest agency. Headed directly for the Class-B end of a double bill.

THE GREAT BIG DOORSTEP, by E. P. O'Donnell (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50). A story about the family life and noisy adventures of some scrub-whites living in the steaming lush barrens of the Mississippi Delta country. It is told directly but in fun, and it has more than the customs

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of the countryside: it has implicitly the people and their code for living, it has as well as anything their natural habits and their speech. As very few characters in books may, they can talk of fishin-cackle and vegetavles, white laycorns and the gravy-yard, not with the voice of Amos and Andy but with final and even testy authority. A delightful fable.

BOTANY BAY, by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall (Atlantic-Little, Brown, $2.50). An apprentice highwayman (eighteenth century) is caught and thrown into Newgate, but escapes hanging by virtue of the new experiment of settling Australia with convicts. William Bligh was of course one of those who helped to present Australia to His Majesty and, subsequently, to Nordhoff and Hall. Swashbuckle, but well founded.

PRIZE STORIES OF 1941, edited by Herschel Brickell (Doubleday, Doran, $2.50). Under a new editor, this is the Best O. Henry Award collection in years, though it is still true that whatever the ups and downs, the judges of the twenty stories selected for them maintain a steady level of undistinguished judgment and comment. Kay Boyle's first prize ("Defeat") is good, but more emotionalized topical reporting than a story, certainly inferior to Sally Benson's "Retreat," a fine and complete piece of fiction. The other winners, Eudora Welty, Hallie Abbet, Andy Logan, are thin and fragmentary stuff, and are easily surpassed by the work —even among those selected from the year's grist—of Algren, Clark, Faulkner, Maltz, O'Hara, Still, Thomas.

VALIANT DUST, by Margaret Mackprang Packay (John Day, $2.75). A novel of Victorian manners in nineteenth-century China, doubtless written for the cinema trade. Deals with young and old love, West meeting East, shipwrecks, people "running amuck," historical asides and the Boxer Rebellion as a dénouement. Compounded of the literary and socially mannered clichés of the last two hundred years.

HIGH RISING, by Angela Thirkell (Penguin, 25 cents). This delicious novel, previously unpublished in the United States, deals with a widow who has taken to novel-writing to support herself and her four sons (Tony, aged eight, is wonderful). The plot turns on her successful efforts to rid an old friend of a secretary-siren who threatens the tranquillity of High Rising. Trollope, in his grave, must be chuckling at this adept disciple.

Contributors

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE is a student of naval affairs, and the author of "Hold the Pacific!" which appeared in the September 29 issue of The New Republic.

ALAN WALKER is the pseudonym of a close student of the labor movement.

E. D. KENNEDY, for ten years an associate editor of Time and Fortune, is the author of "Dividends to Pay." His most recent book is "The Automobile Industry," published by Reynal and Hitchcock.

SOLOMON F. BLOOM is a member of the history department of Brooklyn College and the author of "The World of Nations: A Study of the National Implications in the Work of Karl Marx." His essay on "Karl Marx and the Jews" will appear in Jewish Social Studies in January.

KAY BOYLE is the author, among other books, of "Plagued by the Nightingale" and "The Crazy Hunter." She is living in Nyack, New York, working on two books and giving a course in "Creative Writing" for adults at the Nyack High School.

THOMAS REVEILLE is the pseudonym of an economist in the government service. He is the author of "The Spoil of Europe: The Nazi Technique in Political and Economic Conquest," recently published by W. W. Norton.

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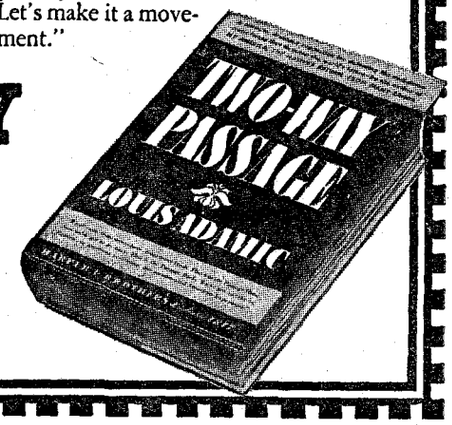

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